





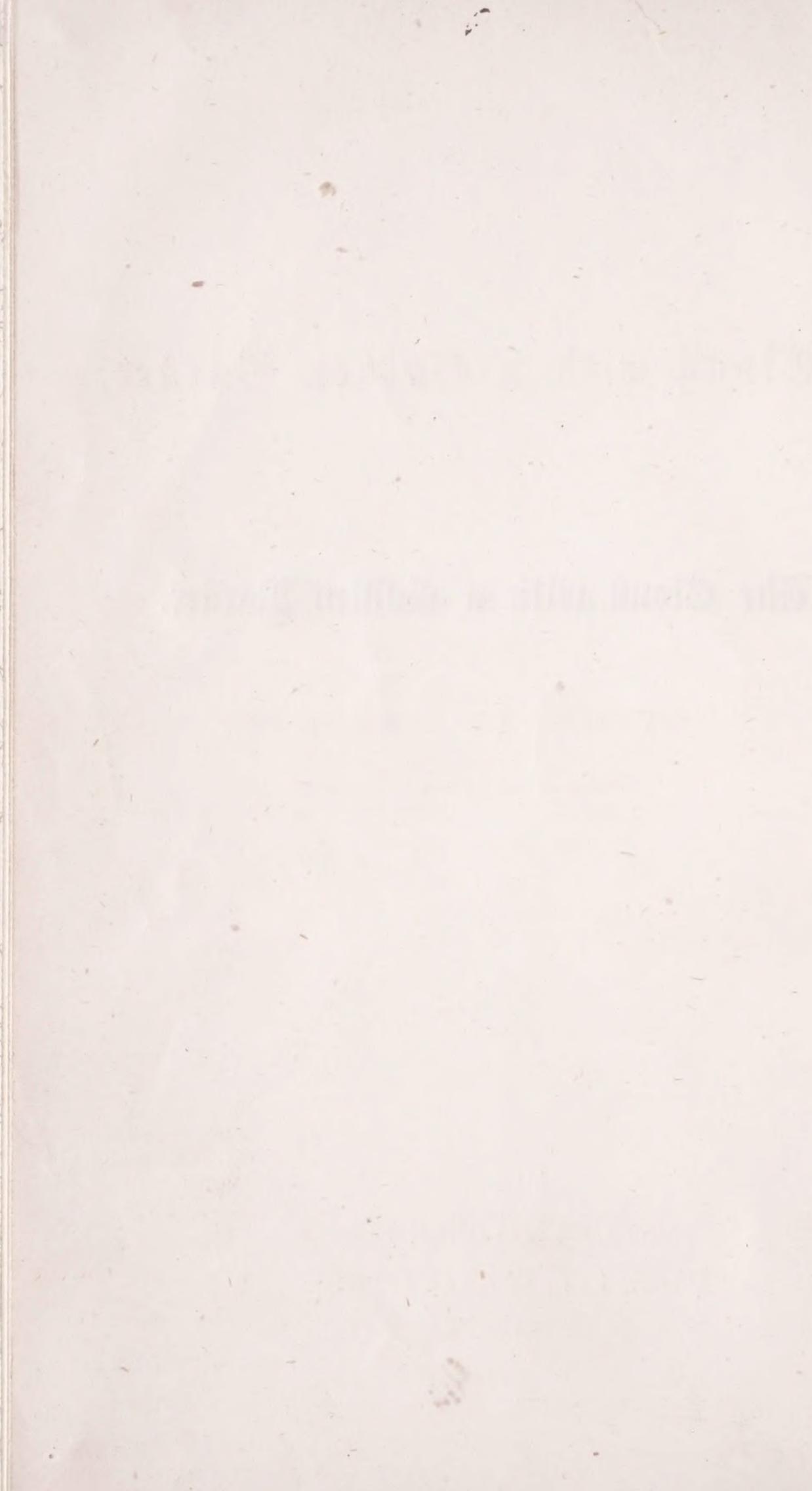








The Cloud with a Golden Border.



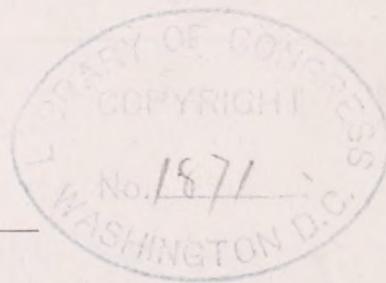
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THE

# Cloud with a Golden Border.

BY HELEN HAZLETT,

AUTHOR OF THE HEIGHTS OF EIDELBURG.



PHILADELPHIA :  
T. ELLWOOD ZELL,  
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## INTRODUCTION.

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IN submitting this work to the community, the author feels she has their sympathy in regard to the Hebrew race. Although scattered and peeled at present, the chosen people of the Almighty will surely take their station among the Christian nations of the earth; and if a few scattered seed may be dropped in the way of any of the lost sheep of the House of Isarel, that will take root and spring up in the heart;—if the footsteps of one wanderer from the fold, be led to recognize his own Shepherd in Him who hung on Calvary, by means of this little work, she will feel her time has been far from mispent.

May the Lord grant an increase to the planting of Paul and the watering of Apollos; and may the harp of this stricken people be again strung, and their hearts and voices again attuned to praise their long lost Messiah, God's own anointed Son, Jesus of Nazareth.

A few of the characters are drawn from imagination, many from real life, and some of the most prominent have passed away since the commencement of this volume.



“The gloomiest day hath gleams of light,  
The darkest wave hath bright foam near it,  
And twinkles through the cloudiest night  
Some solitary star to cheer it.

“The gloomiest soul is not all gloom,  
The saddest heart is not all sadness,  
And sweetly o'er the darkest doom  
There shines some lingering beam of gladness.

“Despair is never quite despair ;  
Nor Life, nor Death, the future closes,  
And round the shadowy brow of care  
Will hope and fancy twine their roses.”



# THE CLOUD WITH A GOLDEN BORDER.

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## CHAPTER I.

“Thou art long in learning him,  
In unravelling all his worth,  
And he dazzles not thine eyes at first,  
To be darkened in thy sight afterwards.”

“THERE,” exclaimed Cornelia Nesbit, “one week’s toil to no purpose,” tossing a large crimson Afghan upon a lounge, and rising, she walked to the window to more closely scan the clouds, and the snow flakes that fell so pitilessly; “this storm,” she continued, “completely disappoints our pleasure to-night; was there ever any thing so untimely; do you think there is the least prospect of a cessation, father?”

The gentleman appealed to, raised his eyes from the newspaper he was reading, and glancing towards the window, answered, “Not the least, dear, you must endeavour to submit to circumstances, and endure your home, and what it may offer, this evening; your home comforts are certainly not few, Cornelia,—your sister, is storm-bound at grandpa’s, no doubt *she* will find something to enjoy in *her* captivity there, how different your temperaments, daughter.”

Without regarding her father’s tone of disapprobation, she said, “I refused to go with Marion, I was so bent on finishing my Afghan for our excursion to-night, or I might have enjoyed grandpa’s entertaining tales of by-gone-days; and I will venture anything, Rad and Howard will remain there too, and not give

a thought to my being left to bear my misfortune alone."

"You intend then to exclude yourself from our society this evening," said her father, looking at her over the top of his paper, "the old folks at home have no charms for our youngest daughter, is it so *Cornelia*?" he added, laying down his paper, and fixing his large grey eyes upon her.

"Why, father, different ages cannot be expected to assimilate, but very often I do pass whole days delightfully at home and at grandpa Houston's too, but I feel so dreadfully chagrined, not to be able to sleigh this evening, I do not expect to find pleasure in any thing."

A shade of sadness passed over the brow of Major Nesbit as he resumed the paper. The young lady listlessly coiled herself upon a large rocking-chair by the side of the fire; she was attracted after a short interval by a patterning of feet, divesting themselves of snow, and hastily arose to ascertain who the visitors might be at such an inclement hour. "It is Rad, father," she exclaimed, "and a stranger with him. Who can he be? a Prince incognite from his appearance, I wonder where Rad found him; come take an observation, father; he is shaking the snow from his cap, you never looked upon such a head."

"Perhaps not, Nellie, but I think I can have patience 'till the presentation of the nonpariel."

The young gentlemen after disrobing themselves of their cloaks, &c., in the hall, entered the parlor, Radcliff introducing Mr. Mordecai to his father and sister, as a friend of their uncle, Judge Winters, "whom," he added, "I have just saved from a living tomb among snow drifts."

"Not braving this storm on foot, sir?" asked Major Nesbit, as he courteously placed a chair for the stranger.

"My sleigh foundered about a mile distant, and I was in search of some persons, and place, to receive my horses, which were totally unable to proceed with it, when I so opportunely met Mr. Nesbit, who had

little difficulty in persuading me to accept the hospitality of his father's house for the night. How delightfully grateful to an almost frozen man is the sight of such a fire."

"We are most happy to afford you an asylum, Mr. Mordecai, and hope you will feel quite at home in my family," replied the Major. "Radcliff, you will attend to having the horses of Mr. Mordecai detached from the sleigh, brought to the stable and properly cared for."

"I have dispatched Hogan, father; he and Dr. Rogers' black Sam, have them securely lodged at the 'Vulcan' by this time."

"Your son's orders preceded my suggestions, Mr. Nesbit, I rather think my horses are as comfortable almost as their master by this time."

"Radcliff is prompt," was the reply; "but why direct them to be taken to the Vulcan, my son? the 'Queen' is a far more respectable house, and nearer." The entrance of Mrs. Nesbit, followed by a little boy, prevented any explanation.

"It is very pleasant," said that lady, after a kindly welcome to the stranger, "to have our circle widened by others, as some of our own household are detained elsewhere from the same cause. Had *you* not been prevented in time," she continued, turning to her daughter, "you, too, in all probability, Cornelia, would have found a stranger's home during the storm, which is likely to continue, I think, several days."

"Well, mother, it would have been a break at least in the monotony of my country life. I do like variety. I wonder where I should have put up" she added, laughing.

"That would very much depend upon where you put down, sis," rejoined her brother. "Perhaps the sleigh might have been lodgement, if at a distance from any habitation."

"That would have been a direful exchange indeed for *your* home, Miss Nesbit; too much of variety, even for the very romantic," said Mr. Mordecai, "I may be

considered among the peculiarly fortunate, indeed I have already ceased to regret my overturn."

"I must own I am terribly disappointed, nevertheless," returned Miss Nesbitt, I had my heart set on this sleighing party,—fifteen sleighs engaged, and all the élite of Varastone invited,—it is too bad."

There was deep feeling in the soul, if the countenance be a true index, as he replied. "You have not been disciplined in a very severe school, young lady: few pass through life entirely shielded from trouble."

"Of course, sir, I do not expect to be exempt more than others from trials, but from relation, friend or stranger, I never get the slightest sympathy, no matter what occurs, and I do insist, to be disappointed in a charming evening sleighing party is no minor trouble."

A bright smile lighted the features of Mr. Mordecai, as his eyes fell upon her excited face, but suddenly checking his mirth, he enquired, "Will it not be possible to have the same enjoyment some more propitious evening? as there is always great pleasure felt in anticipation."

"Not if I am to be included. I sometimes think I am fated to be foiled."

There was an expression of compassion settled on the naturally grave countenance of the stranger; he only said "Pity you should think so,"—and turning to the little boy, who was now standing at the knee of his father, said, "Will you tell me your name?"

"Houston Nesbit, sir."

"How old are you, Houston?"

"I shall be ten next month, sir."

"The youngest of your family, I suppose, Major Nesbit."

"No; where is Hattie, Cornelia? Mr. Mordecai must at least have the opportunity of admiring our Bird, go bring your sister here, Houston."

"Hattie says she shall not come till she gets her next turn coasting," exclaimed the messenger, after a brief absence. "May I go too, father? Hogan is there, we will not get hurt."

"I think not, my boy; you will be sick to-morrow if you expose yourself, and tea will be ready presently. Did you tell Hattie I sent for her?"

"She was thinking so much of the play, father, I do not think she noticed what I said. How nice it must be to coast on the sleds, father, I would like to be well;" the pale cheeks of the little invalid looked still paler as the dark lashes rested upon them, moistened with tears.

"Our little boy does not often repine," remarked Major Nesbit, as his mother drew him closely to her, and laid her cheek against his, to hide her own emotion.

"The sight of a snow storm is always exciting to children, and to be debarred its enjoyments must be very hard," said Mr. Mordecai, kindly.

"Why, Hous," said his brother, from the other side of the room, "I should think you had been sick so long, you might be quite used to see others play in the snow, without expecting to join them; mother always holds you up as a paragon of patience."

"He very seldom gives you occasion to upbraid him, Radcliff," replied the mother, "and this is only momentary;" the little fellow returned her kiss, and looking up gratefully into her sympathising face, became perfectly composed, and taking a seat on his father's proffered knee, chattered with Mr. Mordecai until "tea" was announced, when the family, with their guest, repaired to the dining-room.

"Well, little daughter," said Major Nesbit, as a rosy beautiful child bounded in at an opposite door, "have you had a good time with the other boys?"

"First-rate, father,"—but catching a glimpse of a stranger, her eyes fell, and she very quietly took her accustomed seat by her brother Houston, and excepting an occasional whisper to him, little Hattie was perfectly silent during the meal. Towards its close Hogan came in to say Morgan Jones would like to borrow "Bird" Nesbit's sled, if she would lend it for the evening.

"You might have told him yes, "Hogan, any of them may have my sled, replied the child, with earnestness;

"but let me speak to Morg."—As light as a sylph she sprang from her seat, and through the passage,—"take it, Morg, take it, Alick; but if you do not mind you will get a lift, for Sam Morey just drove a spike into the runner to hold it through the game, it is under the shed; good night, boys."

"Good night, Bird, thank you for the sled," was returned by several voices. "That is a piece of unhewn humanity, Mr. Mordecai," observed Radcliff, as he passed the hot rolls to him, "a specimen of real country life."

"I never heard a more exquisite voice, Nesbit; it is really melodious."

"It is to that she owes the title of Bird," replied Major Nesbit, "and untutored as she seems, she is as timid as a fawn, and exceedingly sensitive."

"I observed she shrank from my observation, but I certainly must seek her acquaintance; that forehead promises intellect."

"No dearth of that, resumed Radcliff, "and it has its weight among her friends; what Hattie suggests always carries, although she is universally the youngest of the group, and so perfectly good-tempered, her influence is very great throughout the village."

"Well—yes—" observed Cornelia, "Bird is smart, and has a sweet disposition, but I do wish for her sake, we could reside in the city, she is as wild as any colt."

"Yet as docile as any lamb under discipline, will you not add, daughter?"

"It was to her conduct, not character, I was alluding, father," she replied, coloring, "and at the moment remembered the mortification I underwent a short time since, riding up the back road with several others, mounted on a five-barred gate, was Bird, her bonnet hanging about her neck, consequently her curls blowing in every direction, she was talking at the top of her voice to a number of children perched along the fence, her hoop over her arm upon which she was beating time with a short stick as she harangued. I had determined to pass without noticing any of them, and held back my horse, when unfortunately she espied me,

and to my utter dismay she sprang down and darted towards me, with one foot on her hoop, she screamed 'sister Nellie, if your are going home, please tell Hogan Fatima has gone out of the pasture lot, and none of us can find her, he had better see to her before milking time.'"

"I conjecture Fatima was the cow," said Mr. Mordecai, convulsed with laughter.

"Yes," resumed Miss Nesbit, "and before I had begun to think what I should say or do, she was again seated on the gate, and again flourishing her beater; I was exceedingly mortified."

"What effect had the encounter on your party, Miss Nesbit?" asked Mr. Mordecai, still amused.

"Of course, there was no word of remark—yes, one gentleman exclaimed, as she bounded away, 'What a beauty! and what a voice!' but that was in pity to my chagrin. I cannot tell what they thought; I shall never get over my horror when she so clamorously claimed relationship. Oh! that 'sister Nellie.' I gave her a lecture on her rudeness, and it is to that father had reference when he spoke of her docility under rebuke."

"Do you know, all you tell me of that little Bird, as you call her, increases my desire for an intimacy. Master Houston, how shall I make friends with her?"

The little fellow looked at him with a very sweet smile, and replied, "I do not know, sir; Hattie is very shy, but I guess she will like *you*, because you talk to me so kindly."

"Hattie is his oracle," pursued Cornelia, "you think Bird perfect, do you not Hous?"

"Hattie never does any thing naughty when I see her; I was not there when she jumped off the fence, and chased your horse, sister."

"You never saw her jump off the fence?" asked Mr. Mordecai, rising with the rest to leave the table.

"Many a time, sir; but not the time she made sister so angry, and cried all day because she would not speak to her." Mr. Mordecai quickly changed the

subject, seeing by the suffusion of Miss Nesbit's face, this second mortification was not any less than the first ; her mother, also, observing her confusion, said, as they were going towards the parlor, " Nellie dear, I would like you to see the children's books arranged for their lessons before you leave them."

" Are you fond of music, Mr. Mordecai ?" said Radcliff, " if so, we can entertain you in that way."

" I once was, but not having heard a piano for some years, my taste may have changed."

" What ! had no sisters to thunder seven hours' practicing in your ears daily ? What a happy fellow ! Though, I must acknowledge, my sister Cornelia is au fait, at the instrument."

" My family consists of my father and myself, neither of us, *now*, very musical."

" You have no mother then ?" said Mrs. Nesbit, very kindly.

" No, Mrs. Nesbit ; my mother was taken when I was about fifteen, my father has had the arduous duty of supplying the place of both parents. I hope his expectations in me, and from me, will not be disappointed." A sad, bitterly sad expression, passed over his countenance as he spoke ; no one replied, and the silence was becoming a little awkward, when Cornelia joined the circle.

" Come, sis," said Radcliff, " Mr. Mordecai has not listened to a piano for several years, let us have one of your best pieces ; I wish Howard were here with his flute."

She did play ; and had her musical powers been in disrepute, her character would have been retrieved ; Mr. Mordecai, praised the piece, and performance, and with more politeness than interest, was asking for another, when Hattie burst into the room.

" Softly, Bird," whispered her mother, " what has happened ?"

" Let me hear the trouble too," said Mr. Mordecai, slipping his arm around her, " who knows but I may be able to comfort you, little Miss Hattie."

Suffering herself to be held, and laying one hand on her mother's arm, she said softly, yet eagerly, "You know mother, that sister Marion is away, so I told Housie, if he would teach, and hear me all my lessons, I would try to help him; well, mother, he did, and I know them all, but mother, his spelling is not at all like mine; the words go skipping about every where, and so covered over with the pictures I cannot find any of them, and mother, our teacher will come to-morrow, and Housie will miss his lesson, and he is crying; I thought maybe Raddie would help him," and she turned her tearful eyes anxiously toward her brother.

"Go, Radcliff," urged his father, "go help the children through."

"It will be endless," was the reply. "What is the use of a tutor if his pupils are to be taught for him? Why, in the name of sense, cannot he as well teach him to find the places on the maps, as hear recitations? You are certainly imposed upon, father, by that Ryers."

"James Ryers is a much respected and very estimable gentleman, Radcliff, and entirely above reproach. I think it a great privilege to have a mind such as his to guide my children; there are not many superior to him, my son; he does his duty in my opinion, and your uncle is as perfectly satisfied."

Radcliff did not reply, neither did he show any greater inclination to assist the children.

"When I was a little fellow," whispered Mr. Mordecai to Hattie, "I loved to look for those skipping words over the pictures, how would you like me to help your brother?"

"We would both like you to help him," exclaimed the child, gazing up so wistfully.

"I will, if you will give me one of your sweetest kisses."

She threw her arms around his neck, the kiss was most gratefully given, and pleasantly returned, then taking her in his arms, despite the remonstrances of

Radcliff, carried off the delighted child to the dining-room.

"I should have gone to the rescue myself, had I had the slightest idea of his going," said Radcliff, somewhat mortified; "he will get plenty of employment if he undertake to instruct and amuse our two."

"Radcliff," replied his father, quite sternly, "the manner you speak to, and of your younger brother and sister, bespeaks great heartlessness; the one an invalid, too; it is my desire you will desist; you can be silent, or find some other mode of expressing yourself."

"All children, father, under sixteen, are to me totally uninteresting, and I suppose, because I so seldom come in contact with any others, ours seem an especial bore, though, I dare say, contrasted they would appear well; but surely, sir, you do not expect me to turn teacher, or playmate, either office would kill me in a fortnight."

Major Nesbit sighed; his look of sadness might have touched almost any heart not quite callous, "I would rather do both," interrupted Cornelia, "than live long in the house with Mr. Mordecai; he would soon give me the glooms; I feel like hiding whenever he plants those strange piercing eyes upon me."

"I admire him very much," said Mrs. Nesbit, "he is evidently unhappy; did you know anything of his history, or ever see him before to-day, Radcliff?"

"No, mother, never; I knew it would be terribly dull at grandfather's, so passed over to the Vulcan, to enjoy anything new they might have."

"It is a matter of wonder to me, Radcliff, what you find attractive at that place."

"Only father it is the almost sole resort for strangers from Rocklyn, and we country folks naturally craving entertainment, find occasional visits there afford some little."

"Is more required than a daily visit to Varastone, can supply my son?"

Radcliff bit his lip, and looked vexed.

"The reputation, too, of the host is said to be of

very dubious standing in his own village," continued Major Nesbit; "is that so, Radcliff?"

"Admitting it true, father, I do not see why that should influence the stranger who merely looks for self-entertainment, be it physical, or intellectual, it is not customary to inquire the character of a man of whom we expect no more; in business transactions, I grant you father, it is of importance to know the weight of a man among his own. Buck spreads a good table, and his bar is voted unsurpassed; every paper extant is to be found there, and his house is much frequented. I confess I often while away an hour or two there, quite pleasantly." Finding there was no reply, he continued — "Being fully aware Buck had no accommodations for other than passing travellers, I invited Mr. Mordecai to our house, until his sleigh could be repaired and the roads became passable. I was confident at first glimpse, he was of no ordinary mould; his manner, dress, address and equipage, bespoke him of the élite; therefore I introduced myself to him, and despatched Hogan and Dr. Rogers' Sam, who had both very opportunely come over for oats, to detach the horses from the broken sleigh; Mordecai very gracefully accepted my invitation, and I do not think I shall be found mistaken in my first impression of his position."

"I received the idea somehow," observed his sister, "that you discovered him buried up in the snow."

"Well he was, Nellie, literally dug from a heavy drift, by Buck's bar attendant and one of the stage drivers; yet notwithstanding he was covered with snow when he came up to the hotel, I felt a strong affinity, and that the acquaintance of the bearer of the fleece was worth cultivating; I assisted in removing it, which I certainly would not have done, or asked him here, had I not been confident he was of no plebian origin."

"I do not see how his *origin* or his *position* is so materially to affect us; 'he was a stranger and we took him in,'" said Mrs. Nesbit, "as such he has a claim upon our hospitality."

"I should not like to house every unfortunate

stranger, mother," returned Radcliff, laughing; "but I must see to Mordecai, whether he has not wearied of tutorship;" quickly returning, he said with a laugh, strongly resembling a sneer, "he and his pupils have decamped. I suppose it is not needful I should go in farther quest of him;" his appearing at that juncture made it quite unnecessary. "Where were you Mordecai? I went in search but did not find you."

"Extending my acquaintance in the family," he replied, gaily, as he drew a chair very near the fire, and bent forward to warm his hands; "after the lessons, which were soon committed, with very little aid from me, we all went off with Hogan, that pleasant-looking negro who waited at tea, to see a sled of his manufacture."

"Excuse me, Mr. Mordecai," interrupted Mrs. Nesbit, "Houston was not exposed to the night air?"

"Oh! no, Mrs. Nesbit, this same Hogan placed him at the kitchen window from which he had full view of all our doings; I was particularly attracted by his docility, and his perfect satisfaction with his very small portion of the enjoyment."

"The gentle boy has learned patience by continual self-denial, he expects very little."

"His sister is a remarkably bright child. I am surprised she has not been advanced more by their teacher."

"There would be danger of mortifying Houston, were Hattie promoted according to her abilities. He has a fair intellect, but sickness has been a serious disadvantage to his education. Mr. Ryers coincides with me it is better to restrain Hattie in her progress, until placed under separate tuition."

"Ryers has been appointed to the chemical chair during the absence of Summerford. His lectures will avail him something; pity he is obliged to teach; the very last employment I should select."

"*You teach, Radcliff, without a single ingredient for the office; Mr. Ryers is a model of meekness, patience, firmness and withal an inimitable power of*

imparting," replied his sister, placing a ball of worsted she had been winding, in her work basket. "Radcliff Nesbit, schoolmaster, what an amusing idea!"

"Cornelia—have you yet called on Mrs. Ryers?" enquired Major Nesbit.

"Called on *who?*" exclaimed Radcliff, stopping at the back of his father's chair, as he walked the floor; "Is it incumbent that Cornelia should visit our Tutor's wife?"

"Ryers is no ordinary person, Radcliff," replied his father, "and if report speaks truth, it would be a privilege to gain the friendship of his accomplished, intelligent, beautiful wife."

"Marion did call, father, long ago, with Aunt Harriet, but Mrs. Ryers was particularly engaged; a few days after, Mr. Ryers brought Lemuel to return our visit to his mother, with an apology that *she* never visited."

"This very superior specimen of humanity did not seem to estimate the privilege of visiting here very greatly," said Radcliff, scornfully; "to what may this decided exclusiveness be attributable?"

"I am sure, brother, I was as averse as you to any step towards intercourse with Mrs. Ryers, but Aunt Harriet and Marion fancied her something entirely beyond the sphere in which circumstances had placed her, because they happened to hear somewhere, she had translated several books from different languages, had moved in the first circles once; and those baskets Mr. Ryers brought here of her workmanship, quite settled their opinion as to her refined taste and accomplished mind, consequently called—"

"And the acquaintance by the paragon declined?"

"Yes; Marion tries to excuse her, but owns it was not precisely well-bred to rest upon a first visit."

"Aunt Harriet and Marion are both rather impulsive."

"Not at all, either of them, my son," interrupted Major Nesbit.

"At any rate, father, in this case a moderate share

of forethought might have guessed, a person of so much éclat would not have connected herself with a schoolmaster; who was she, and to what place did her name and parentage give renown?" asked Radcliff, with a haughty sneer. Mr. Mordecai, who had been a silent auditor, now appeared interested, and looked earnestly at Cornelia, as she answered, "I have never made any special enquiries regarding her. I asked Marion if she knew whom she was adding to her circle at the time she made the slighted visit, but she replied in her decided way, 'I do not enquire who people are, Nellie, but what; and Mrs. Ryers is a perfect stranger, has no friends either at Varastone or here at Grangeville, and is the wife of a worthy, excellent, christian gentleman.' So that is the extent of my knowledge of her, Rad, and I do not expect to extend it."

"Where are those fruit-baskets, Nellie? If you are an admirer of the fine arts, Mr. Mordecai, you will appreciate the workmanship. Bring them, daughter."

"My judgment is not very reliable on such matters, Major Nesbit; do not take any extra trouble to exhibit them, Miss Nesbit; my opinion of their merit would be valueless."

"Poor Ryers," pursued the Major, "he brought them to Mrs. Nesbit, with a request she would show them to some of our friends, adding, 'Mrs. Ryers finds it necessary to turn her talent to pecuniary advantage, I do not dare pity him, but we admire and respect his wife, for her laudable efforts to assist her husband in his exertions to support his family.'"

"Is that large?" enquired their guest.

"Two little children, the eldest has been here several times, a fine boy of three years old; the little fellow says he would like to come often, but he is waiter, and his mamma is nurse, so I judge they live without a domestic," said Mrs. Nesbit; "I do feel exceedingly interested for them, and certainly would not permit the sale of her handy-work to go out of our family, could we afford to retain them. She requested the name of the artist should be withheld."

"It will be sacred with me," replied Mr. Mordecai, with one of his sad smiles, as Cornelia stood the exquisitely wrought baskets upon the table before him. He very carefully raised one by its handle on his front finger, turning it round and round to observe every article of the represented fruit, then laying it slowly down and folding his arms, he still stood fixedly gazing on the beautiful specimens of artistic skill.

"Your quiet admiration pronounces them perfect, Mr. Mordecai," said Mrs. Nesbit.

"Yes, Mr. Nesbit," he replied, turning quickly at the sound of her voice; "the most fastidious critic could find no defect; might I be the anonymous purchaser?" he asked, with one of his melancholy smiles.

"They are not worth ten dollars each, the price at which she has valued them; I would not buy them, Mr. Mordecai."

"Yet, Mr. Nesbit," he answered, "neither you nor I would think that amount mispent on an evening excursion. With my prohibition and your consent, ladies, the baskets are mine. There is a combination of natural talent and acquired art, produced by patient labor, a perfectly beautiful article, such talent and toil ought to be encouraged, yet not by the multitude, and to prevent all publicity, from which naturally the lady would shrink, a friend of yours, never to be named, will contract to receive as many as may be placed at your disposal; but oblige me by saying nothing on the subject until sometime after my return home, and you have had other visitors, as the husband otherwise would of course rightly conjecture the purchaser, as he will probably hear my name and detention by the storm from the children." As the group resumed their seats near the fire, Mr. Mordecai took from his purse a double eagle, saying, as he laid it by the baskets, "One of the ladies will be my agent, not forgetting my restriction."

"You do not mean your left hand shall know what

your right doeth, Mr. Mordecai," said Major Nesbit, smiling.

"I have no especial regard for any of those sayings, sir; but have a decided aversion to having my name paraded on such occasions," was the grave reply.

Mrs. Nesbit began, "but, Mr. Mordecai —" when Hattie peeped in to say "good night."

"Come in, Bird," called her father, "did you thank Mr. Mordecai for helping you both so nicely this evening? It is a pity Mr. Ryers will not be able to get through the snow to-morrow to hear them."

"We never thought of that," said Houston, who followed Hattie into the room, "and we know our lessons so real well; I am sorry."

"It is time you were both asleep," said Radcliff, turning his head half over one shoulder, as he sat lolling in his chair.

"We have been helping Hogan crack nuts for Mr. Mordecai to take to his home, when he goes," replied Houston, softly.

"I am sure I feel very grateful to you all for remembering me, I shall love to have a supply of nuts greatly," replied Mr. Mordecai, stroking the head of the delighted Houston.

"Birdie and me—"

"And I," said Cornelia.

"Birdie and I wondered, and wondered, what we should find for you to remember us, when you were far away from us, but we could not think of anything, we thought you would care for, so we ran to ask Hogan; he told us all gentlemen liked nuts, so we told Hogan to get us some very nice ones."

"And we have cracked lots," exclaimed little Hattie, coming to the side of her brother, "and have put them in a bag, all ready to go in the sleigh; you do love nuts, Mr. Mordecai?" she asked, looking eagerly up into his face.

"I should certainly forfeit every claim to the gentleman, if I did not, little Hattie; do you love them yourself?"

"Yes, sir, dearly; but mamma does not think them good for us in the evening: to night, I was just forgetting, and going to put a large kernel into my mouth, when Housie said, 'don't, Bird, mother does not like us to eat them at night,' so Hogan said he would not taste one either, because that would make us want them, may be."

"I think you, chatter-box, will weary Mr. Mordecai, and had better go to bed," muttered Radcliff.

Hatty immediately jumped from the knee on which Mr. Mordecai had seated her. He returned her good-night kiss, saying, "Such chat was very pleasant to him, it spoke so well for the good training of their mother."

"The naturally amiable," observed Mrs. Nesbit, "are easily governed; there is not much praise due me. I am very fortunate in having had servants with excellent principles the last ten or fifteen years, the importance of such is incalculable among children. There is Margaret for you, Bird; good night, little daughter."

Hattie kissed everybody good night, climbing up the rounds of Radcliff's chair to reach him, as he did not make the least movement towards receiving her token of attachment, or acknowledge it by any return. "I envy you your little sister, Mr. Nesbit," Mr. Mordecai said to Radcliff, as she ran off with her nurse.

"I suppose Hattie is a rather superior child," was the careless reply, "but all children are best in bed by this time in the evening."

"To night, she has been delayed in performing a thank-offering for me, dear innocent child."

"From the ambiguity in your answer, Mr. Mordecai," said Major Nesbit, "I am inclined to think there is no extreme partiality for nuts."

"A truth I may not deny, yet would not have it whispered to the children, and regret you have guessed it, Major Nesbit; nevertheless, I shall with grateful pleasure accept them. Hattie's nuts have intrinsic sweetness, and the child's narrative, which I shall relate to my father, will add three-fold to his enjoy-

ment in partaking of them. Like myself, he loves little children."

The countenance of Mr. Mordecai had assumed a very bright expression while speaking, but very soon the same sadness crept over his features, and before the hour for retiring, he complained of headache and chilliness; Mrs. Nesbit kindly proposed a sedative and immediate rest, he assented to both. Radcliff with courtesy lighted him to a very pleasant chamber, which had been previously warmed: "Will you require anything more of me, Mr. Mordecai?" asked Radcliff, as he stood the glass upon the bureau, "you really look quite unwell."

"No, thank you, I shall need nothing beside your mother's two restoratives," he made an effort to smile.

"Good night, then; I hope they may prove amply beneficial."

Another "thank you" followed this, and Radcliff closed the door. Now the restrained, pent-up, tempest of emotions gave way; for a long interval, his bowed frame, his face buried in his hands, was shaken by the anguish which had been ill-suppressed; at length he arose, drank the contents of the glass, but it ministered no alleviation to his sufferings, he paced the floor, occasionally clasping his hands convulsively. Overcome at last by exertion, or by weakness, he threw himself upon the bed, and very soon slept heavily; the brilliant rays of the morning sun awakened him to a dreary sense of sickness in the house of strangers, and to a consciousness of mental suffering with which no being should intermeddle, and no one on earth could soothe. With difficulty he arose, bathed, adjusted the clothing which had not been before removed, and, unrefreshed, feverish and heart-sick, he obeyed the invitation of Houston to "please come to breakfast."

"Why did you make this exertion, Mr. Mordecai?" said Mrs. Nesbit, as he sat down on the arm-chair very near the fire, "I am really hurt you thought it necessary."

"I did not realize my weakness, Mrs. Nesbit, until I

reached this room, but I am confident it will be transient; my system has been overtaxed by undue exertion, a day or two will quite renovate me."

Declining any other refreshment than a cup of tea, he was persuaded to lie down on a sofa in the library; the restlessness and feeling of great weariness perceptibly increased; Mrs. Nesbit sat quietly in the room with her sewing; little Hattie hovered about, silent, too, unless Mr. Mordecai spake to her, and then she would whisper very gently, leaving him at the first bidding of her mother, returning again at short intervals; he seemed to listen with interest to her childish stories, and loved to have her sitting on her little chair beside him; neither was Houston less mindful of the invalid stranger, preventing the dogs barking near the house, and watching that no door was noisily closed while he was sleeping, was his province, and he faithfully performed his part.

The depth of the snow baffled all effort of Hogan to reach the doctor's. The opinion of Dr. Rogers and a prescription from him, the kind black was very sure would "put him on strong legs again."

"Unless you dissent, my dear Mrs. Nesbit, I will remain where I am to-night, I do not feel equal to walking up stairs."

"Just as you fancy, my dear," replied Mrs. Nesbit; "I desire you will feel at home, I certainly shall have pleasure in adding to your comfort in any way."

There was true gratitude in that sorrowful smile, as he pressed Mrs. Nesbit's hand; leaning over him, she whispered, "Your own mother has been removed from you, may I not supply her place until you have recovered your health and strength?"

A low "God reward you," was the reply.

Major Nesbit remained with him during the night; his half uttered expressions in his uneasy slumbers told of a mind ill at ease; at one time he would call out imploringly, "Return! return! pride of our hearts, return!"—at another bid, apparently the same person, "Begone! accursed from Israel, forsaken of my father." There was the very bitterness of woe in the exclama-

tions, "Miriam! my sister, my idol, pride of my father, light of his dwelling, daughter of Abraham; forsaken, wandering outcast, degraded, lost! lost!" His bosom heaved with the excitement, then sinking with a groan he again quietly slept.

"Young Mordecai is very ill; it is terrible we cannot obtain medical advice," said Major Nesbit at the breakfast table next morning.

"I feel so awfully nervous," said Cornelia, with a long sigh; "he is a strange man at any time, but I really think it would not be possible for me to remain in the house, if he continue long ill, and rave as he does; father, did you say you believed him to be a Jew?"

"Only from some words he uttered in his delirium, Nellie; he has not at all the appearance of an Israelite."

"I think he has, father; those black, brilliant eyes, so closely set to his nose, he is a real Jew, depend upon it, father; dear me, to think we have to nurse a sick Jew, I only wish I could retire to Mr. Graham's until he is able to go back to Rocklyn."

Major Nesbit's lip was firmly compressed as he glanced at his daughter; her mother's eyes filled with tears as she replied, "Suppose your brother had been cast among the Hebrews, sick and sorrowing, and they had all nervously deserted him?" There was nothing she could say, therefore, Cornelia was silent. "We must do our best until Rogers' lane is passable; Cornelia, I will not leave Mr. Mordecai again, Bird can stay with me; he appears well pleased to have her in the room."

"Jane almost tells me she thinks very little of my housekeeping, mother; and, indeed, I see no great use in interfering with her, she knows so well herself."

"If the principal shows no concern, Nellie, the agent will soon lose her interest also. I merely wish you to notice and commend a little, praise is very encouraging."

"Leave the two children with me, Mary," said Major Nesbit, "I will play tutor to-day, and listen to the lessons prepared for yesterday." Houston and his little sister gladly followed their father to the parlour; Rad-

cliff took up his novel; Cornelia, with evident reluctance, went to attend to household duties; Mrs. Nesbit repaired to the library,—“You look brighter, my dear,” she said, on entering, “do you feel so?”

“Your potion, Mrs. Nesbit, has certainly benefitted me; I do not feel nearly so languid this morning. Where is the Bird?”

“Just gone to her lessons with her father, Mr. Ryers is detained at home by the snow. You must be introduced to our favorite when you recover, Mr. Mordecai; our tutor is universally admired.”

“Mr. Nesbit spoke of him as very highly gifted; why is it he has not chosen a more elevated station in life?”

“Mr. Ryers will, no doubt, be better appreciated when more extensively known. In England, his native land, he was very peculiarly unfortunate, in losing an opportunity he had reasonably expected, and also in being disappointed in a large legacy he was confident was to have been his; he has never named his circumstances himself. The gentleman who introduced him to Mr. Nesbit gave him a short sketch of his history, and the letters he brought with him to America were full confirmation that he is well-born, and has always been in the best society, his address and conversation add strong testimony; why Mrs. Ryers so secludes herself is mysterious. I would have very much liked to cultivate her acquaintance, for her husband’s sake. But you are wearied, and looking badly, please lie down again, it is better you should not try to be agreeable.” Mrs. Nesbit turned the pillow, drew an Affghan over him, and sat down quietly to read.

“I could listen without any fatigue to a psalm, if you will read it, Mrs. Nesbit.” Closing his eyes, he did not move until she had read several. Fearful of tiring him again, she laid down the book.

“You are exceedingly kind, Mrs. Nesbit,” he said, in a low voice; “the psalms are a cordial to a burdened spirit.”

“I always find them so,” was the reply, “the entire

Bible is a rich source of comfort to the weary pilgrim, Mr. Mordecai. Shall I read from the New Testament now?"

"Thank you, not any thing more at present." There was not another word spoken, but Mrs. Nesbit observed he sighed frequently, and felt grieved that one so young should have so heavy a portion of life's troubles. Ever and anon as she looked upon the pale, sorrowful face, she yearned to learn the cause, and to pour into that heart the balm of sympathy and consolation. A smile of real pleasure greeted the tiptoe entrance of little Hattie, she quickly obeyed his beckon to his side; she stood leaning over him a long while, resting on her pretty little elbows until Mrs. Nesbit said, "Her questions will tire you, Mr. Mordecai; come away, Bird."

"Yes, dear mother, but sister said, just now to Parker Rahl, that Mr. Mordecai was a Jew, and I want him to tell me what is a Jew."

"No, daughter, Mr. Mordecai must not be troubled now with any more questions; some other time, perhaps, he will tell you and me too, if he be an Israelite—a descendant of our good old Abraham. Come to me, dear."

Mr. Mordecai smiled, and released her hands. Springing lightly over to her mother, she asked, eagerly, "Was Mr. Mordecai one of the Israelites, mother, who came over the sea on dry land?" There was a suppressed laugh from the sofa.

"Not quite, dear," replied her mother, "but never mind now; go, tell sister, mother wishes her to make some sago for Mr. Mordecai, and to teach you, so that when she is sick you can do it for her."

"Oh yes, mother, and next time Mr. Mordecai comes here sick, I can make his sago myself." She was starting, but suddenly stopped and asked him, timidly, "Will you tell me about your relations when you get well; will you, Mr. Mordecai, all about the Israelites? I guess sister does not know they were Jews. I will tell her."

"When I get well, Hattie, we will talk all about it together some of these days, but I do not think I have had a kiss to-day;" the kiss was freely given, and the

child bounded like a fairy from the room. Rather an awkward silence ensued. "My name would avow my parentage, you certainly judge me of Hebrew descent, Mrs. Nesbit."

"It really had not occurred to me, your appearance would not bespeak it."

"Yet my father's origin is never mistaken, and I am said greatly to resemble him."

"You are the only child of your father, are you not?"

"My father had a daughter, but she is not;" this was spoken with so much emotion, Mrs. Nesbit, fearful of farther excitement, remained silent. The day wore away, toward evening Mr. Mordecai persuaded Mr. Nesbit it was unnecessary any one should remain with him, saying, he "felt drowsy, and in all probability would sleep quietly."

In the morning he said he was better, enjoyed a cup of tea and a chat with Hattie; yet there was a lassitude about him, Mr. Nesbit thought alarming, and proposed to Radcliff to drive over for Dr. Rogers, as he had declared his intention of venturing to Varastone.

"Hardly worth while, father," was the reply; "the langour is the natural effect of the disease; he will recover now without any medical advice; besides, I am rather in haste, as I am obliged to go over to grandfather's."

Major Nesbit, knowing it would be useless to urge his going, returned to the invalid. Radcliff went to order his sleigh.

## CHAPTER II.

“ Each feature is stamped with immortality,  
For all its desires are infinite.”

“ You, and Marion are storm bound truly, Howard,” remarked old Mr. Houston, to a tall, fine-looking young man, standing by his side, at the window, “ neither of you will be able to stir this day.”

“ Well ! grandfather,” replied young Nesbit, laughing, “ you know young lawyers’ engagements are not very pressing, and we have moreover, the prospect of a pleasant day, passed with our grandmother, aunt Harriet and yourself.”

The hand of the old gentleman was laid affectionately on the shoulder of the youth, but a deep sigh escaped him. “ Dear boy,” he said, “ you and Marion almost remove the shadows of life from my declining years. Would that I could have as much comfort in Radcliff and Cornelia.”

There was a look of sadness, as the young man answered, “ Nothing but prayer will avail there, grandfather ; that indomitable selfishness, grace alone will conquer. Since her return from boarding-school, Cornelia has placed a low estimate on every thing that does not tend to give her pleasure for the moment ; constant excitement is necessary to her existence, and her oldest friends are cast aside, if not mingling in the gay circle, and holding a certain position in life.”

“ We cannot tell what Marion’s example may effect, Howard ; who can resist her winning, lovely ways ?”

They were interrupted by the entrance of a young lady with a very sweet countenance, and a beautiful mouth, set with teeth of snowy whiteness.

“ Why, Howard,” she exclaimed, “ I thought you were at least half-way home by this time ?”

"I am waiting for my little sister to be *avant courier*, this fine morning," was the reply. "The snow is at least four feet in depth along the road."

"Then, grandpapa," she said, leaning over the arm chair, on which he had seated himself, before a large wood fire, and kissing his brow, fondly, "I can stay the whole day with you."

"Not the whole day, my little sunshine," he replied, returning her caress warmly, "you have already lost two hours in sleep since the sun rose."

"Pardon me, grandpapa, his majesty had not peeped above the horizon when I was dressed, and busily engaged studying my lesson for my class on Sunday, and am now at your service to read a chapter before grandma and aunt Harriet are ready for worship, and breakfast. Seating herself on a low stool beside him, she opened the Bible at some passages which were not quite clear to her. The explanation was most cheerfully given, and a half hour was pleasantly spent before the remainder of the family assembled in the breakfast room. The hissing urn, the smoking cakes, and the crackling, blazing fire presented a strong contrast to the dreary appearance without.

"Grandfather," remarked Howard, as they seated themselves around the table, "in my old age, my beau ideal of comfort, would be a home similar to this."

The eye of Mr. Houston was raised for a moment towards him, but he only shook his head in reply. A smile played over the face of Mrs. Houston.

"I can read your thoughts, husband; your feeling was, that Howard would soar far beyond any thing to which we have ever attained. Have I not divined rightly, my dear?"

"Quite a seer, wife. Old Howard Nesbit would never be content with what to me is a competency; an income of two thousand dollars; neither would he have his youth pass without gathering a few laurels by the way. How many times, Howard, have you seen yourself at the head of the Bar at Varastone?"

The youth colored deeply. "Since I looked to an

immortal inheritance, grandfather, I trust ambition is much subdued within me."

"Natural propensities are difficult to conquer, my son, but a certain amount of ambition is laudable. Only, keep in view the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Howard answered with much emotion, "I will endeavor to fight the good fight, and obtain a crown of glory far better than any earthly diadem. Since my admission to the bar," he continued, smiling, "four years ago, I have not earned any great name for myself. I intended, at once, remunerating my father for my education, but it has not been in my power. Five hundred a year is all that I make, while Radcliff, as a book-keeper, receives a salary of one thousand."

"And from the little you obtain, your mother told me she received two hundred dollars."

A flush suffused the cheek of Howard, as he replied, "A poor pittance for all her former care of me, but my office rent takes a large portion of my earnings."

At this moment, a shrill bark of a dog was heard, answered in the distance by an alternate howl and fierce barking. "Something must be the matter," remarked Mr. Houston, getting up and raising the window, "Snap never makes a disturbance without cause. Snap,—my good fellow."

The dog sprang upon the window-seat, then ran some distance toward the sound of distress, returned, ran again, and seemed half frantic to make something known to his master. Howard seized his hat, and followed by Mr. Houston, and two men living in a cottage near, who had been attracted by the bark of the dog, attempted to get through the snow in the direction pointed out by Snap. The heavy flakes beating in their faces, and the soft, deep snow giving way at every step, rendered it almost impracticable, and nothing but the feeling that some life was endangered, could have enabled them to proceed. They had fought their way but a short distance, when a strange dog bounded toward them, and crouching at their feet for a moment,

uttered the most piercing cries, then springing forward a few feet, they discovered a figure almost buried up in the snow. When the dog found they were actually raising his master, his joy knew no bounds, he sprang into the air over and over again, endeavoring to reach the shoulders on which they were placing him, but obtaining a sight of his pale and lifeless face, suddenly, he changed, and again whined most piteously, but encouraged by the kind voice of Mr. Houston, with head and tail drooping, he slowly followed them to the house.

Miss Houston, apprehending such an event, had placed blankets upon the couch, and prepared every thing for the reception of the stranger. The dog watched intently, while they were divesting his master of unnecessary garments, occasionally rolling upon the floor, whining low, but so sadly, that it went to the heart of all present.

When he was placed upon the couch, and they commenced rubbing him, the dog, quietly licked his hand, stopping frequently, and looking intently into his face for some recognition, but, at length, seeming to understand he might be of service, he licked the hand and arm so vigorously, that his efforts became quite serviceable in producing circulation.

For two hours, however, there was no sign of returning life, and hope had almost fled, when a cry of frantic joy was given by the dog, who springing down, jumped upon Mr. Houston's shoulder, almost overturning him, then seizing his coat, drew him to the sofa. The cause was soon unfolded. The fingers moved, soon the foot was drawn up, and the eyes slowly opening, were cast vacantly around, but resting them upon his dog, his face lighted, and he faintly repeated his name. Bumpo quickly raised his head, looked intently at his master, then placing his face upon his cheek, as though he comprehended his suffering, he lay perfectly motionless, with his paw resting gently upon his breast. There was such a subdued, plaintive manner about the whole transaction,

that the ladies were affected, even to tears. Entire consciousness soon returned, and the stranger asked to whom he was indebted for all this kindness?

"To Bumpo, sir," replied Howard, laughing, "if he had not soon made himself known, you would scarcely have been reclining on this couch at present."

A hand was feebly extended to the animal, who again licked it most affectionately.

The appearance of the stranger was exceedingly prepossessing; he was apparently about fifty-five, tall, and slender, with regular features, and a high commanding forehead, bespeaking much intellect, his thin, brown hair was slightly silvered.

Mr. Houston seated himself beside him, and took his hand.

"My home is in Varastone," he remarked, "Am I near that city?"

"Five miles distant," was the reply. "You are at the house of Philip Houston."

"Ah! A name well known to me by reputation.—I am Albert Spencer, of the firm of Spencer, Hope & Co." Feeling much exhausted with the exertion of speaking, he took some warm coffee, and soon was sleeping soundly. In about an hour, he awaked, entirely refreshed, and strengthened. Bumpo, now quite happy, joined Snap in the kitchen, and seldom appeared in the dining room, unless called by his master.

"I fear," said Mr. Spencer the next morning, "that my absence is causing much uneasiness at home, and, as the snow will oblige me to trespass on your hospitality a day or two, I will send a message by Bumpo. My leaving home was unexpected, on most pressing business. I travelled twenty-five miles in the stage, transacted all that was necessary, and was returning by the same conveyance, but stopping last evening at a Hotel, which was by no means comfortable, I, early this morning started on foot, to endeavor to find one more fitted to my taste."

"By what name was it called?"

"I think the Vulcan, frequented evidently by persons of low taste and habits."

"Yes. It is kept by Mr. Buck," said Howard, "a poor miserable place; yet I believe the man has amassed quite a handsome property. The Queen is far better."

"I trust, Mr. Spencer will hereafter seek neither the Queen nor Vulcan," said Mrs. Houston, "while this house stands just between them. He will always meet a most welcome reception at our fireside."

"A kind invitation, Mrs. Houston, of which I shall be most happy to avail myself." A low whistle soon brought the dog bounding from the kitchen to his master's feet. A note was written to Mrs. Spencer, saying, that in consequence of the roads becoming impassable, he would be detained from home a little while, avoiding, however, the slightest allusion to the dangers through which he had passed, merely stating that he was being entertained at the hospitable mansion of the good Mr. Houston.

The note was suspended around the neck of the dog, and the names of John, Philip and Kate repeated. Bumpo stood upon his hind feet, listening earnestly; then, placing his paw in his master's hand, and making him quite a graceful bow, he bounded from the door opened for him, and was soon out of sight towards Varastone.

"That dog is a treasure, Mr. Spencer," remarked Howard.

"Yes!" was the reply. "I verily believe he has more soul than half the men of Varastone."

"That depends upon the connexion in which you use the word soul, sir."

"With my views, it was not misapplied, Mr. Nesbit. For the last ten years, much against my will, I have been led to believe the immortality of the soul a fable."

Howard started. "That is indeed a most unfortunate conclusion, sir, and one which requires great credulity."

"The immense imposition practised by hypocritical deceivers in the Church, has forced this belief upon

me," he replied, bitterly; "they will have much for which to answer, if there be a judgment."

"Allow me, to remind you, my friend," interposed Mr. Houston, "that, to his own Master, each stands or falls. You will not be judged according to their misdeeds."

"I should have a sad reckoning, Mr. Houston; the deeds of Mr. Selwin, the President of Stone Bridge Bank, would be a weighty account, laid to the account of any man, and he is only one of many such professed Christians."

"He is a disgrace to his profession," replied Howard; "he must have robed himself in these habiliments, to subserve his own purposes. Look to Him, whom he feigned to serve, Mr. Spencer; do you find any flaws in his character?"

"I looked to the waters of the fountain, sir, and did not expect to find them poisoned. In Mr. Selwin, I placed implicit confidence. Three weeks since, by his advice, I placed the little all of an orphaned niece, in that bank, the result is well known to you. He has also, kindly loaned thirty thousand of mine to some dear friend, or with much forethought, invested it for his wife and children. The ruin of many a poor widow and fatherless child, has been sealed there. And where is the author of all these grievances? Has the arm of the law been put forth for their redress? No! it has fallen powerless, and he has escaped unscathed."

"Let us look away from an earthly, to a higher tribunal," replied Mr. Houston, "to the law, and to the testimony. The soul that sinneth, it shall die, whatever cloak may be assumed to hide its nakedness. Does not Messiah say, 'The Prince of this World cometh, and hath nothing in me:' and because Judas, one of the highest professors in the world, betrayed his Lord, did that tarnish the glory of his mission? I need no answer; you will, of course, concede the point. Then tell me why, if our dear Saviour is wounded in the house of his pretended friends, you should add another

pang to his sore travail, by placing your unbelief in the catalogue of crime."

The earnest, solemn manner, of Mr. Houston, almost unmanned the stranger, but endeavoring to conceal his feelings, he replied :

" If we see none of the fruits of His mission, how are we to judge of its efficacy ? "

" By making a trial, ourselves ; by opening *our* hearts to the truths of the Bible, and the influences of the Holy Spirit."

" But how can this be accomplished ? For the first twenty years of my life, I was in the habit of prayer, the importance of which was impressed upon me, by a pious mother, from my earliest youth."

" What is prayer ?" asked Mr. Houston.

" An address to the Deity, with an expectation of an answer, which I never have obtained."

The conversation, becoming rather personal, Howard quietly followed his grandmother, as she left the room, to attend to some household matters, leaving the old gentleman alone with Mr. Spencer. Mr. Houston remained silent a few moments, as though in deep thought, then fixing his eyes very sadly on his friend, he answered, " I much fear, sir, you have never offered the effectual, fervent prayer, that alone avails."

" It very certainly has not been effectual, Mr. Houston, and, I confess to you, for the last ten years, since I became a professed sceptic, my mind has not been at ease."

" I thank God, it has not, sir, and trust you will find no peace until you seek it at the foot of the Cross. You were yesterday, on the brink of a precipice ; I shudder when I think how fearful would have been the unfolding of eternity to a lost soul. Life is now before you to choose, to-morrow may be too late. Oh !" he continued, with much emotion, " trifle not with time, with your Redeemer, with your never-dying soul ; wrap not your talent in a napkin, but let your energies be consecrated to the service of your Lord and Master."

Mr. Spencer rose, and paced the floor ; he said

nothing, but his excited manner showed some impression had been made; of what nature Mr. Houston could not tell, but he offered a silent prayer, that this conversation might be a savor of life to his soul, and that he might yet add a jewel to the crown of his Redeemer. The servant at this moment entered, to place some wood upon the fire, Howard, and his sister coming in also, the conversation was interrupted, and Mr. Spencer, perhaps to drown thought, seeing a chess board upon the table, proposed a game to Howard. Mr. Houston sighed, and excusing himself, retired to his chamber. Chess was a game, of which Howard was exceedingly fond, and Mr. Spencer, who was one of the first players in Varastone, soon found he had no mean competitor; Marion looked on with great interest, and soon all parties were absorbed in the game. After a desperate struggle, Mr Spencer won. "It was a slight oversight of yours, that enabled me to do so," he remarked; "you are, by far, the best player I have ever known. Have you devoted much time to it?"

"When opportunity offered, I was always ready to embrace it, but Judge Duncan has kindly thrown many audits in my way of late; they have kept me fully occupied."

"Ah! you are at the bar, then?"

"I have been admitted," replied Howard, smiling, but my causes can very readily be numbered."

Mr. Spencer knit his brow, as though a sudden thought had entered his mind: "Nesbit—Mr. Nesbit—Did you plead the cause of Haywood versus Grayson?"

"I did, and lost it."

"So I understood. Your speech, nevertheless, was pretty fair. Why did you undertake so desperate a case?"

"Mr. Haywood is very plausible, and he withheld important items, that kept me in the dark as to the fraud he was practising. I afterwards rejoiced in my own discomfiture, as law and justice would certainly have been at variance had he gained his suit. A conscientious lawyer will never undertake a case of which he

cannot see the justice; even politically, it would be unwise, as the better classes of the community would be slow to give him their confidence in future."

"But suppose no other cases offered, and you were dependent upon your profession for your daily bread?"

"Then I would seek a maintenance elsewhere, or starve ere I would make a compromise with conscience."

The countenance of Mr. Spencer lighted. "There will be no need to change, young man; go on, you will prosper, I have little doubt. You have imbibed your grandfather's sentiments, a far richer gift than all his inheritance."

Howard smiled. "I feel it indeed a privilege to be the grandson of my grandfather. The inheritance will be but little, if such men as Mr. Selwin play so well their part."

"How! Did Mr. Houston lose in the Stone Bridge Bank?"

"He had deposited eight thousand dollars there the week before, which he intended investing in a mortgage, and as his whole estate is valued only at forty thousand, it was quite a loss."

"He did not name it, although we conversed upon the subject."

"No; if my grandfather cannot praise, his lips are always sealed, but I know he felt it deeply."

"By what principle do you suppose he is actuated?"

"Those laid down in the Bible, that expressly require much forbearance."

"I do not understand such lenity; as for me, I would fain call down fire from heaven upon the man."

The family, soon assembling, the chess board was laid aside, and the conversation became general.

"Was it your daughter you named to Bumpo, Mr. Spencer?" asked Marion.

"It was; and I think about your own age, Miss Marion; she will be eighteen to-morrow."

"I am much older, sir; I will be twenty-one the following month."

"Not very much her senior," he replied, laughing,

and taking her hand kindly; "I should be most happy to make you friends."

"This is not my home, sir; my father's residence is one mile nearer Varastone; I shall be happy to see her there."

"We will take advantage of this fine sleighing," he replied, "to make you a visit. Kate is very sociable, a little spoiled, of course, as she is an only daughter, but pretty clever withal."

"She will give us a few days, I hope," said Miss Houston; "Marion and Cornelia can remain here with her. We shall, then, be able to judge of her merits," she added, laughing.

"In the summer, she will be pleased to do so; at present, she is so fascinated by the gay world, into which she has made her first entrance this winter, that I scarcely think she would like to leave the city for any length of time. My hope is, that she will weary of it. It is extremely irksome to me, as her older brother not caring to accompany her, her papa is always expected to escort her ladyship every evening at an hour when the rest of my chamber would be far more grateful."

"Not every night, Mr. Spencer," exclaimed Marion, with a look of astonishment.

"Every night, my dear, either at home or abroad. I see you think it rather a waste of life, and so it is, a miserable waste of life, nothing learned, nothing gained. I should be rejoiced, myself, to settle down in the country, with a few friends, and plenty of books, if my family could be content."

"Our appreciation of things," said Miss Houston, "depends almost entirely on our education."

"Yes," replied Mr. Spencer, with a sigh, "Kate would feel herself immured in a prison, and, as we live for our children, their happiness must be our first consideration."

"Ought not the judgment of the parent to be first exercised," asked Mr. Houston, "to know whether the inclinations of their children accord with their future happiness and welfare."

"In the abstract, that cannot be gainsayed, but circumstances often prevent our acting as judgment would dictate."

Mr. Houston shook his head, but the very sad countenance of Mr. Spencer prevented a reply.

"I do not think I should like Miss Spencer," Marion remarked, when she retired with her aunt for the night; "she must be extremely light and foolish. I do not covet her society, by any means; she would suit Cornelia far better."

"Know, before you judge, Marion; then, perhaps, you can be of service to her."

"Of service! Why, I suppose she will scarcely look at us. Her father feels grateful, and, on that account, desires an intimacy, but I doubt whether we shall accord. I could not brook gracious condescension. I never wish to step out of the position I have always held. I know it is an excellent one, but, auntie, fashionable people never like us."

"I often smile, Marion, although I care naught for such matters, to hear who are our élite. Rank and fashion, truly, are widely separated. Piety and education are the only things that really refine the heart. I am thankful, Marion, you have sufficient independence to choose your friends from among those most in accordance with your own taste, without reference to mere fortuitous matters, which give no weight to real worth of character. I have not the least fear you will seek the unrefined, or form any friendship of which your parents would not entirely approve. But it is twelve o'clock; quite time to go to sleep."

Two days passed away very pleasantly, and Mr. Spencer felt quite a reluctance to part with his new friends, but the roads being now passable, he knew that his presence was needed at Varastone. Their attention was attracted by the bells of Radcliff's sleigh coming across the lawn. He was evidently surprised, on entering, at seeing Mr. Spencer seated familiarly in the family circle.

"Do you know who you have here?" he asked of Howard, when he had an opportunity.

"Yes! Mr. Spencer, of the firm of Spencer, Hope & Co., one of the oldest firms in Varastone."

"But their style of living is such, I wonder he can content himself here. Mrs. Spencer has her reception once a week, and seldom deigns to make a visit herself, and their annual ball a few weeks since outshone itself, it was so magnificent. They have one daughter, just introduced, a perfect beauty, I saw her at the anniversary ball, but she was entirely surrounded by admirers from the upper ten, none others dared approach her. It is said Mrs. Spencer is worth a million of dollars."

"I should think," replied his brother, "to be rescued from a grave in the snow, he might be content even though his bed were not of down and ivory."

"Rescued! No! Who rescued him?"

"Jacob More, grandfather and I."

"I wish I had been the happy fellow, my business would have been greatly forwarded.—A junior partner in that house! What a noble rise that would have been for me. But my guiding-star will never lead to fortune."

"A thousand dollars yearly, Radcliff, is no small sum for a young man of three and twenty, particularly when spent entirely on himself."

Radcliff colored. "But in that house, Howard, I should have at least four thousand. I should then be able to render much assistance at home."

Howard shook his head. "Your expenses would probably increase with your income. Why do you not now liquidate that debt which father incurred the last year of your education?"

"I have always intended doing so, but my expenses are heavy, and money takes wings."

"Surely not for board, that is a matter not calculated in your current expenses."

Radcliff's lip curled. "I should be sorry to be considered a boarder in my father's house; besides, I have a certain appearance to maintain of which you church people know little."

"And wish to know less," was the reply "if my own pleasure is alone to be consulted."

"It is not my pleasure only, but my standing—sleighting-parties, theatre, opera-boxes, &c. If I mingle, I must bear my part in these expenses. Then, you know, my vehicle costs something, which I am obliged to keep to travel to and from Varastone."

"I find the stage sufficiently convenient."

"Very few of the respectable make use of that; I should soon fall in the estimation of my friends."

"I am thankful I have no such heavy incumbrances; my parents, under all circumstances, shall be my first care."

"And mine also, when I realize my expectations."

Howard, with a look of displeasure, turned from him, and they both entered the parlor.

"At what time does the stage start?" enquired Mr. Spencer.

"There are two," replied Radcliff, "at seven and nine, but a seat in my sleigh is at your service, Mr. Spencer."

"Thank you, it is immaterial to me; the stage is generally my mode of conveyance."

An expressive look from Howard was well understood by Radcliff, and his private vehicle seemed to carry less weight with it for the moment.

"Do you not go to Varastone this morning, Mr. Nesbit?" Mr. Spencer inquired.

"I do, sir; but must first see home for a few moments. Radcliff tells me a stranger is with us quite unwell; my services may be needed there."

"A stranger!" exclaimed Marion, laughing, and looking archly at Mr. Spencer. "Did you rescue him from the snow?"

"I brought Mr. Mordecai, from the hotel where he took refuge in consequence of the snow," replied Radcliff. "He is a Hebrew, and seems to have a very accomplished mind."

"I suppose," said Mr. Spencer, "he is the son of

Solomon Mordecai, the rich banker. He is a gentleman of uncommon intelligence, but one of the most bigoted of his race. His daughter was an intimate friend of a niece of mine, a splendid woman in mind, manner and appearance. But she has drawn upon herself the anathema of her father, by becoming a follower of the Nazarene, as he terms Him. He told my brother, that although his harp was hung upon the willow, his right hand would sooner forget its cunning, than he forget his dear Jerusalem, by taking her enemies into his bosom."

"Poor deluded man!" said Mrs. Houston, "when will the veil fall from their eyes, and they be brought to acknowledge their own Messiah."

"A conscientious Jew is a mystery to me," Miss Houston remarked. "They certainly worship God through a Mediator."

"We must leave them, Harriet," replied her father, "they worship they know not what, and deny Him whom God has sent."

Mr. Spencer raised his eyes, and was about answering, but finding the eye of Mr. Houston fixed upon him, his fell, and he remained silent.

"Howard," said Radcliff, "if you will drive Marion home, I will accompany Mr. Spencer in the stage. To this arrangement his brother assented; and, after taking a kind leave of his new friend, and promising to dine with him on the morrow, the sleigh drew up; Marion was seated, and Howard about giving the horse the rein, when a splendid sleigh, drawn by two jet-black horses, drove gaily up the lawn. The steeds pranced and tossed their heads, as though they took delight in exhibiting their fine forms and gracefully arched necks. Two men, with long grey coats, faced with black, and buckled hats, were seated in front. Before it stopped, a large dog sprang out, and the next moment Bumpo was in the dining-room, capering around his master with the utmost delight. A young man, about twenty, was lounging on the back seat, closely enveloped in a large shawl, with a buffalo-robe

placed over his feet. Throwing them carelessly aside, he sprang out, and glancing towards the group in the sleigh, with a slight inclination of the head, entered the house.

"Rather majestic, considering his obligations," remarked Radcliff, who was standing beside the sleigh; "I must go in and receive this young man, perhaps he will improve on acquaintance."

"Welcome to your introduction," said Marion, "were I in your place, I would wend my way to the stage office. In grandfather's house, we need not play mine host or hostess."

"You are almost too independent, Marion; you can afford it, but I have a name to make in the world. These people may be of service to me."

The sleigh drove off, and, as Radcliff entered the dining room, he could not help overhearing the words of young Spencer, who was sitting in the library with his father. "These people should be rewarded, father, for all their kindness; I suppose money could not be offered them."

"Money! Philip Spencer, what do you mean?"

"I mean, father, that it is unpleasant to lie under obligation to any, particularly those not quite in your own position."

"Your indomitable, and I may say, absurd pride, Philip, shocks me; it quenches all better feeling. It must have a fall, and I almost hope, for your sake, my son, it may."

"What would you have me do, sir? Mingle with plebians, and call every man I meet my fellow?"

"I would have you feel respect for those superior to yourself, as the family under this roof certainly are."

"Then, why is it said, that Radcliff Nesbit has been trying to edge into society these two years, without success, if he hold already a better station than I?"

"Society! What constitutes society? Go, read a piece written, I think, by Mr. Custus, on that subject. That meets my views; but," he continued, rising, "you are bending from your dignified position, by not

manifesting your good breeding, in seeking at once our host. If you ever grow old as gracefully as he, I shall be proud to call you son."

Mr. Houston received the thanks of the young gentleman with the utmost grace and courtesy, and the very respectful manner of the young man, showed he was quite awed by his dignified deportment. An introduction, by Mr. Houston, followed to the other members of the family, and Radcliff could scarcely realize the same individual stood before him. Having an anxiety to form this very desirable acquaintance, he determined, if possible, to do so, and accordingly endeavored to forget the unpleasant altercation he had heard, and at least to communicate it to no member of his family.

"Mamma is very anxious for your return, father," remarked young Spencer; "Mr. Frisby has brought with him, from Washington, the Russian Ambassador, his wife, and two sons. They lodged one night at the Vicar's Hotel, but, the next day, mamma invited them to be our guests. They will remain with us three weeks. Mr. Frisby has his wife and daughter with him. Old Aunt Katie has arrived also, with her usual train of two servants, two dogs, and a cat; Bumpo looks upon them as intruders."

"It is quite time, indeed, I was at home," exclaimed Mr. Spencer, rising, and walking towards Mrs. Houston, but I can truly say, I have never parted with so much regret from even long-tried friends, and I trust," he continued, taking her hand in both of his, "an intimacy has commenced, to be terminated only with my life." Then turning to Mr. Houston, "Will you allow me, sir, to rank you among my friends? Your kind advice, can never be obliterated from my memory; I thank you for it." As he spoke, his voice faltered, and his eyes filled with tears; he added, in a very low tone, "pray for me."

The hand was kindly pressed by Mr. Houston: "Highly will I prize your friendship, Mr. Spencer, and

it will be my constant prayer, that I may soon hail you as such, in Christian bonds."

Mr. Spencer shook his hand warmly, and promised very soon to repeat his visit. Taking a kind leave of the ladies, he turned to Radcliff, "We will take you to any part of Varastone you wish to go, Mr. Nesbit, and to-morrow, I shall expect you to dinner with your brother Howard."

Radcliff hesitated. "The stage drives very near my place of business, Mr. Spencer, I will not trouble you."

"Tut! Tut! I suppose you think no one likes trouble but yourself. Jump in, Mr. Radcliff, I desire the pleasure of your society to Varastone."

While his father was speaking, the flushed cheek of his son showed much uneasiness, and the occasional curl of the lip, told more than he dared utter, but his low, and deferential bow at parting, was the only thing noticed by the family. Radcliff accepted the invitation of Mr. Spencer, and soon the sleigh and bells were out of sight, and sound, far on their way to Varastone.

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### CHAPTER III.

"Confidence openeth the lips,  
Indulgence beameth from the eye;  
The tongue loveth not boasting,  
The heart is made glad with kindness."

THE shouts of little Hattie soon announced the arrival of Howard and Marion; she had seen the sleigh from an upstairs window, and ere they could alight, was in the piazza to receive them.

"How glad I am, dear, dear brother," she exclaimed, as Howard caught her in his arms, and repeatedly kissed her, "I have missed you, and sister so very much. Why did you stay so long, sister?"

"Because I could not get home, Birdie, the snow would have buried me alive."

"Would it sister? I think it fine fun to play in the snow. I have promised to make Housie a snow man. Will you help me, brother?"

"That I will, Birdie, but I am going in now. Doesn't Housie want to see me?"

"Oh, yes.—And Mr. Mordecai's here. Do you know him, brother?"

"No, Hattie, you must come and introduce me."

"Oh! he knows you. I told him you was my brother Howard."

"Were, Birdie."

"Well! you were. Come, sister, I'll traduce you both to him. He is right sick."

"And are you his little nurse?"

"Yes. He says I'm most cured him."

"Indeed! pray let us have your prescription?"

"I don't know what scription is."

"Why, what you did to cure him."

"Oh! I sat down just beside him, real still, and told him beautiful stories from the Bible."

"What stories did you tell him?"

"Oh, all about Jesus; and how he loved little children, and how the wicked people killed him; and I don't remember what else."

"Do, please come in," called Houston, from the parlor, "I am so tired of waiting for you, and mamma says I must not breathe the air."

This summons was speedily obeyed, and Houston, after numberless questions, which were all answered satisfactorily, led the way to the library, where they found Mrs. Nesbit seated, and their guest reclining upon a couch. He arose, on their entrance, but it evidently was so great an effort, that Marion insisted on his resuming his position on the sofa.

"Your hand is feverish, Mr. Mordecai," said Howard, "and you are evidently quite unwell, allow me to bring Dr. Rodger to prescribe for you. He is only a mile

from us, and, with the sleigh, I can see him in a very short time."

"I thank you, Mr. Nesbit, do as you judge best."

"Shall the children accompany me, mother? I can wrap Houston closely in my blanket shawl, I am sure it will be of service to him."

"Do, mother, do," exclaimed Houston, clapping his hands, "you know we seldom have a chance, for, when I ask Radcliff, he always has engaged some lady, or puts me off with, pshaw! or something else. I have not been sleighing this winter. Will you, mother, let me go?"

The face of Mrs. Nesbit crimsoned with mortification, but the little boy, having obtained his object, ran to get his brother's shawl, unconscious that he had said any thing to unfold the character of Radcliff to a stranger.

"Stop a moment, brother," said Hattie, "while I just gather a parcel of snow, I know Sam Winters and James Ogilire, and plenty of other boys will be on their way to school, and will be sure to snow ball us, and I want to be ready for them."

"Excuse me, my little sister; I believe we will dispense with the snow this time."

"I shall not hurt them, brother; I will make them quite soft."

"Although a favorite amusement of yours, Miss Hattie Nesbit, I must think it rather unbecoming your little fingers, and certainly must say no, to being so well fortified against assault. The boys will surely not snow ball grown people, Birdie."

"I don't suppose they'll snowball you, brother, because you are kind to them, and they love you, but I'll tell you what they did to Radcliff." A look from her mother arrested her, and stopping, she looked around enquiringly, then whispered, "Is he coming, mother?"

At this moment, fortunately for poor Radcliff, Houston came into the room, equipped for the ride, and Hattie glided up stairs to get her coat and hat also.

"Where is Cornelia, mother?" enquired Howard.

"She has taken her knitting, and gone to pass the day with Miss Graham."

"Miss Graham! how can she tolerate her? The most giddy young lady in the neighborhood of Varastone!"

"Cornelia has been a close prisoner for the last few days," answered Mrs. N., "and she felt she required some change."

Howard made no remark, but biting his lip with vexation, took Hattie in his arms, and lifting her into the sleigh, in which Houston was already seated, jumped in, and drove direct to the house of Dr. Rodgers. Finding him engaged with other patients, and not able to see him immediately, he made a circuit of a mile, or two, much to the gratification of the children, and returned.

"Is the doctor now disengaged?" he enquired of the servant, who opened the door.

"He is, sir, and in his office." Giving the reins to Houston for a few moments, he went in. He found the doctor lolling in a comfortable old arm chair, before a warm fire, his feet, nicely slippers, were placed on the ball of a highly polished brass fender, and he, attired in a morning gown of every hue. Merely removing his feet, on the entrance of Howard, without rising, he extended his hand to him.

"Good morning, Howard, good morning. I hope for your sake, and mine also, there is no sickness on the carpet. Be seated," he continued, leaning over and drawing a chair near the fire. "I just wanted a bright companion to tell me a little gossip."

"I should sadly disappoint you on that point, doctor, even had I leisure, but I cannot sit a moment. I want you to return home with me, if you can do so; we have a stranger with us, Mr. Mordecai, who requires immediate attention: he is a very sick man."

"What is the nature of his disease? Could not my visit be delayed until to-morrow? I then pass by on

my way to college. My lecturing hour is twelve o'clock."

"In my opinion, delay might be attended with danger; he has a low fever, with much languor."

"If it were one of your own family, Howard, I might make the effort, but really, it is too cold to turn out for everybody. I will give you a prescription for him; perhaps that will answer, if not, return this evening and tell me how he is."

"I shall be obliged to walk, doctor, as I shall have no means of conveyance."

"Never mind that, Howard; plenty of exercise makes hale old gentlemen."

"It would be really doing me a favor if you would see Mr. Mordecai yourself this morning."

"Mr. Mordecai! ah! Is that the son of old Solomon Mordecai, the rich banker?"

"It has been suggested; I presume he is."

"That must be Lemuel Mordecai, the only son. He has a sister, Miriam Mordecai. She has acted most unwisely; living in splendor in her father's house, she undertook to change her religion, as if that mattered a sou, and married a man, a perfect gentleman, to be sure, and of excellent connexion, but not worth a dollar; married him because he held her new sentiment, I suppose. She was an outcast from her father's house, and may have starved to death for aught I know. If you will wait a few moments I will go with you. That would be a patient worth braving a little cold for."

"As I have the children in the sleigh," said Howard, "I will just drive up and down the road until you are ready. I fear they will take cold sitting still."

The doctor soon hailed them, and in a few moments they were again on their way to the cottage of Major Nesbit. Young Mordecai was sleeping as they entered. Mrs. Nesbit had drawn the curtains closely, and was sitting quietly beside him; but at the sound of footsteps, he opened his eyes languidly, closing them again almost immediately. The doctor looked at him

for a few moments, then shaking his head, with a "tut! tut! tut!" took the vacated chair of Mrs. Nesbit, and for a long time sat silently holding his pulse. Several times the eye of Mr. Mordecai opened, and rested upon him, as though making a great effort, but as quickly closed, and he lay perfectly motionless.

"Will he require the lancet, doctor," whispered Marion, who at that moment entered the room.

"Lancet!" he repeated, in a low tone. "That would indeed be a speedy way of helping him into the dark valley. No! no! We must cautiously watch the change of symptoms. It is a low, nervous fever, produced by cold and fatigue. He is running down rapidly, his pulse now is scarcely perceptible. It would be dangerous to remove him to his chamber, Mrs. Nesbit. How will you arrange for the night?"

"We have a large cot, doctor, that can be brought into the room, on which a bed and mattress can be placed."

"It will answer admirably; he will be far more comfortable than on this narrow couch. Give him this medicine every hour; at four o'clock I will again see him. This will be a very serious illness, and will give you some trouble," he remarked to Howard, as he again seated himself in the sleigh; "a thousand pities he had not remained at the hotel."

"I rejoice he did not. Could he have obtained there the quiet you recommend, doctor?"

"Of course not; but he has no claim upon you; he is an entire stranger."

"If our sympathy went out, only for those belonging to us, what would become of the mass of mankind?"

"But the man has wealth, that will purchase all needed comforts."

"Such attention as my mother and aunt Harriet will bestow, could not be bought with India's treasures. I have experienced their gentle turning of the pillow so grateful to an aching head, and those little nameless attentions which so much mitigate suffering. No! no! Dr. Rodgers, Mr. Mordecai has been providentially sent

to us; it is our duty, and will be our pleasure to watch over him night and day, until he recovers."

"Providential!" he repeated, with a sneer. "Well! well! Your philanthropy is rather too Quixotic for common place minds to comprehend."

Howard remained silent for a few moments, as though in doubt whether to reply, then said, "I go to the fountain head, doctor, the Bible, that enlightens all my path, and points out my duty clearly. It tells me to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and administer a word of sympathy to the afflicted. And the Messiah tells us, that every deed of kindness to his people, He receives as done to himself."

The Doctor looked slightly confused for a few moment, but soon recovering, replied, "At any rate, Howard, on that plea, your duty does not extend to Mr. Mordecai. He, altogether, rejects your Messiah."

"God, is the Father of all nations," replied Howard, "and desires to recall his wandering children. He may be pleased to make us the instrument of restoring this son of Abraham."

"Ah! then yours is a proselyting system, something that lies back of charity, eh!"

The eye of Howard flashed, but it was momentary, and he meekly replied, "Would, that I could proselyte all to the truth, that I could lead man to see his sinfulness and his danger, and flee to the only refuge; to Him, who is the way, the truth, and the life. But I can only pray, that the planting of Paul, and the watering of Apollos, may be the means, through the blessing of God, of bringing forth a plentiful harvest."

"Well! well! You are a good fellow, Howard, no doubt of that," said the Doctor, springing from the sleigh at his own door, and offering him his hand when he alighted. "Some of these days, perhaps, we will have a little more talk on this subject."

"My dear doctor," replied Howard, taking the offered hand kindly, but very seriously, "if I have any goodness, it is all reflected from my Saviour. His righteousness will cover all sin; and God, through a mediator,

smiles upon me as though I were sinless. In no other light, can I be called good. Without Christ, I am a vile sinner in his sight."

"Stop, stop, Howard, I do not want to flatter you, so good bye ; I shall see you again at four o'clock."

Shaking hands cordially, the gentlemen parted.

On the following day, Mr. Mordecai was much worse ; his fever had assumed the typhus form, and he was entirely unconscious of every thing around him. Dr. Rodgers pronounced his situation very critical, and recommended them to send for his relatives, at once.

"He told me," said Radcliff, "he was living alone with his father, and that, at present, the latter was absent, on a tour through the Eastern States ; as he intended travelling leisurely, he had no expectation of seeing him for two months."

"Could we get no clue to his sister ?" Miss Houston asked.

"I do not think her presence would be desired. In my medical attendance, I have heard that separation often canvassed, and, should judge there was entire alienation."

"Unfortunate, exceedingly unfortunate," Radcliff remarked, "I wish,"—a look from his mother arrested him, and the sentence was left unfinished.

"An experienced nurse I can obtain, if you wish it, Mrs. Nesbit," continued the Doctor ; "Mrs. Dorothy is now disengaged, and could come immediately."

Mrs. Nesbit shook her head. "Thank you, doctor, I have a motherless stranger in my charge. I will endeavor to fill a mother's part, and take the same care of him I should desire for my sons, were they sick among strangers."

"There will be watchers required at night, mother," said Radcliff ; "if we have no nurse, that will devolve upon the male members."

"Your brother Howard sat up last night, Radcliff. Your father takes his place to-night ; for the future, we will trust."

"I cannot offer to assist you, mother; my business is sufficiently fatiguing without losing rest at night."

"It has not yet been required of you, Radcliff," his mother answered, very gravely. "I believe you have yet to practice the first act of self-denial."

"It would be like the Romanists, mother, to impose penances on ourselves; the man could readily afford a nurse."

"Can money always command kindness and sympathy, my son?"

"It can command a nurse, in this instance, and save a vast amount of trouble," he answered, rising; "but I must see Howard before he goes to the city."

Mrs. Nesbit was left alone; for a long time she sat, apparently absorbed in thought, and was only roused by the entrance of Miss Houston.

"Did the doctor leave the medicine for Mr. Mordecai, sister?" she enquired; "he seems a little restless, and I hope there will be some opportunity of administering it."

"He did, Harriet; I will go with you to his room."

"Where are the girls this morning?"

"Marion is assisting Susan with the ironing; Margaret is not well, and has gone to lie down."

"And Cornelia?"

"She is very nervous, poor child; I gave her permission to spend a few days with Frederica Graham, while there is sickness here."

"The very time she is needed. She could at least have gone to her grandfather's; her own sense might have told her they would be lonesome without me."

"We must make allowances, Harriet; she has become accustomed to so much excitement of late."

"But how long is Marion to bear the heat and burden of the day? I have no patience with Cornelia's nerves. I think, sister, you ought to take measures to prevent her imposing upon her sister, as she does. It seems to me that all in this family act precisely as they please, and the selfish always gain the ascendancy. The truth is, you are so yielding, and so anxious for

present peace, that unconsciously you allow the rights of the unselfish to be invaded."

"I should have constant altercation, were I to interfere, without gaining the point. Radcliff and Cornelia have high spirits, and would yield very reluctantly."

"I think you err, dear Mary; as time will prove, your forbearance has been misjudged; you are sewing seed that will produce contentions, perhaps disunion."

"Hold! hold! Harriet; if a seer, you certainly do not prophecy smooth things."

"Forgive me, if I have wounded; you know my love, and only my love for them, and anxiety for their future welfare, leads me to speak so frankly."

"I appreciate your kindness, Harriet, and know you have almost my own interest in my children. I confess I see the growing evil, but the remedy is not so easily applied as you imagine. Let us drop the painful subject."

Miss Houston said no more, and they both proceeded to the sick room. The feverish pulse and difficult respiration, showed there was some disease that must be conquered, but Mr. Mordecai lay evidently unconscious of suffering. Several times during the day, Dr. Rodgers came in, but always shook his head to the question, "Is there any change?"

At four o'clock, Major Nesbit and his two sons returned to dinner. "How is Mr. Mordecai?" he enquired of Miss Houston, as she came into the dining-room.

"A change for the worse every hour; Dr. Rodgers gives but little hope to-day."

"Poor fellow!" he replied, "I sent a messenger to his father's house, but the servants know nothing of his movements. It will be a sad shock when the intelligence reaches him, should it terminate fatally."

"Father, I shall sit up to-night," said Howard, "I cannot think of permitting you to do so; but Mr. More has very kindly offered for to-morrow. He has been in the employ of old Mr. Mordecai, and is much interested in him."

"You have had a fatiguing day, my son. Did you plead in Court this morning?"

"I did; and think I will gain my suit."

"Why could not Mr. More have come to-night," enquired Radcliff. "We shall scarcely return from Mr. Spencer's before eight o'clock; after that, it will be stupid business to turn night-watcher."

"I had intended sending a note of apology," replied Howard, "but it escaped my memory; if you are serious, Radcliff, in regard to making the visit, you can just excuse me."

"On what plea?"

"That we have a dying friend under our roof, and my services are needed. I deem that apology quite sufficient."

"I will endeavor to do ample justice to your noble disinterestedness," he replied sneeringly, as he arose to leave the room, "and give it all due publicity as you desire. Truly, all benevolence will die with you, Howard." The door closed quickly, before any reply could be made; the foot of Radcliff was heard, pacing the floor of the room above, which he occupied as a chamber.

"Had I better see him, father?" asked Howard, "he seems quite offended; perhaps I can restore peace by doing so."

"I think not, my son; he is offended without cause; he is the proper one to make confession."

The step of Radcliff was again heard descending the stairs; Howard arose, but Major Nesbit motioned him to be seated.

"Let him alone, my son; let him pursue his own course. His conscience is not quite easy, it goads him; he knows he is not in the line of his duty; he is aware of my embarrassment, yet has refused me a loan on a very slender plea, and a plain lecture has not left him in a very good humor."

"Do you suppose, father, he will go alone to Mr. Spencer's? his introduction is so very recent."

"If he desire to form an acquaintance with them, he

certainly will. Radcliff knows his own power; his manner and appearance are very imposing, and always charm, when he strives to make an impression."

The door closed heavily, and Radcliff, without raising his eyes, passed the dining-room window, on his way to the stage, which was to convey him to Varastone.

"La Grange avenue," he repeated, as he slowly left the stage, and glanced at the card of Mr. Spencer, given to him by that gentleman at parting. "About three squares from here." The town clock sounded the hour of five. "Bless me! If they are punctual, I shall keep dinner waiting at least five minutes; my character for high breeding lost at once!" Quickening his pace, in just three minutes he stopped before a large gray stone house, with the name of Spencer under the bell. Ascending an imposing flight of steps, he rang. His summons was immediately answered by a colored manservant, who, taking his card, handed it to a waiter standing near the door of the drawing-room, and by the time Radcliff had divested himself of hat and cloak, which were given into the charge of a third servant, the second had returned, and was ready to usher him into the parlor. Mr. Spencer met him at the door of a gorgeous apartment, about forty feet in length, the centre of which was supported by colored Italian marble pillars. Giving him a cordial welcome, he introduced him to Mrs. and Miss Spencer, and ten or twelve guests, who were spending a few weeks in this hospitable mansion. He was received with marked politeness by them all, they, supposing him to be the same young man of whom he had spoken so highly. None could fail to admire his grace, dignity and suavity of manner. His personal appearance was faultless, and Radcliff Nesbit, as his father had justly remarked, could always make an impression, when he thought proper to do so.

"Shall we not have the pleasure of seeing your brother?" enquired Mr. Spencer.

"An unforeseen engagement will prevent his availing himself of your invitation, Mr. Spencer. He desired me to say how much he regretted it."

"I am truly sorry," he replied, "but hope he will not long remain my debtor. I shall surely hold him to the payment."

Radcliff, making a polite reply, as to the debt being a very pleasant one to have the opportunity of cancelling, seated himself on a vacant chair beside Miss Spencer, and a spirited conversation commenced between them. His attention was, however, soon attracted by an old gentleman, at the farther end of the room addressing him.

"Is Radcliff a family name of yours, Mr. Nesbit?"

"It is, Judge Bond, on my maternal side."

"May I ask the maiden name of your mother?"

"Houston."

"Then I am right," he continued, "Senator Radcliff Houston was her father."

"My grandfather's brother, sir," he replied, coloring with pleasure, as he observed a look of surprise on the countenance of Philip Spencer.

"He was a noble man Mr. Nesbit,; one, of whom you may well feel proud. He was one of the greatest men Varastone ever produced; the finest orator of his day; and such principles,—his word was sufficient for the most incredulous. I loved him as a brother. He was my most intimate friend. What became of his large property? I understood his family did not receive it."

"My aunt, having the disposal of it, left it to members of her own family."

"What! the Gordons?"

"It was divided among the different members of the Vara and Gordon families. We thought it unjust, and have now no communication with them."

"They were plentifully supplied with this world's bounties before; a proud, aristocratic set, with as much brains as humility. Is your grandfather still living?"

"He is, sir; four miles from Varastone, and would be most happy to see an old friend."

"Thank you, I shall certainly endeavor to see him before I leave the city. Thirty years have elapsed,

since my last visit here, and the grave has claimed most of those formerly dear to me. I shall love to talk with him over past joys and sorrows, and also of a future home, to which we shall both soon be called." The voice of the old gentleman faltered, and Mr. Spencer, in order to give another impulse to his thoughts, said, "Judge Bond, Mrs. Spencer, my daughter, and myself, intend making a few visits in that direction to-morrow, we shall be happy to have you accompany us."

"The gray stone house upon the hill, in the centre of Grangeville, will not be passed by, I trust," remarked Radcliff, bowing gracefully to the ladies, as he spoke.

"The first visit to be paid, and the second only in interest to me in the whole village," replied Mr. Spencer, "Mr. Houston, alone bears the palm."

"I am much gratified, that my sister and brother have so high a place in your esteem. They were fortunate in their timely visit to my grandfather."

"And I am certain," returned Mr. Spencer, with equal courtesy, "it is but to know Mr. Radcliff Nesbit, to rank him with them."

Radcliff colored deeply. "Your friendship, I should prize highly, Mr. Spencer, but fear you will be a little disappointed in your estimate."

Mr. Spencer only smiled, and a summons to dinner relieved Radcliff from his embarrassment. As he crossed the hall with Miss Spencer, he felt, almost as if enchantment had lent its aid to the beautiful picture. Two immense parlors, on the opposite side, the back one used as a dining room, were brilliantly lighted with gas, and a conservatory, running the whole length of the rooms, was filled with the choicest plants, in full bloom. That, also, was so illuminated, that the color of every flower could be distinctly seen. Numbers of little canaries were flying from branch to branch, filling the air with their sweet notes.

"Those little warblers seem quite at home," remarked Radcliff.

"You shall judge," was the reply.

They entered the front parlor. Touching a key of the piano, a little bird alighted on her shoulder, rested for a moment, then, placing itself upon a finger she held towards it, commenced warbling in the sweetest manner. They were immediately surrounded by a dozen or twenty others, all uniting with it, and hovering around their young mistress to receive her caresses; but, as they drew near the dining-room, at the sight of so many strangers, they suddenly ceased singing, and after some little fluttering, manifesting an appearance of alarm, flew back in a body to their own premises. In a short time, they were all perched on rods placed across large cages, and the doors closed for the night.

The table that met the view of Radcliff, far exceeded in beauty, any thing he had ever before seen. It was filled entirely, with the richest cut glass, and silver. In the centre, was a silver stand, nearly touching the chandelier, around which stood colored decanters, filled with a variety of wines, of which, in the course of the meal, Radcliff noticed Mr. Spencer partook very sparingly, merely touching the glass when invited to do so. Determining to make a good impression, if possible, Radcliff permitted the glass to remain before him, almost untasted.

"I perceive, Mr. Nesbit, you are quite abstemious," remarked Mr. Spencer. "Is it from principle or habit?—Do you belong to the Temperance Society, sir?"

A lowering of the brow of Mrs. Spencer placed him upon his guard.

"Not at all, sir," he replied, "neither is it from absolute principle; as I think, a moderate use of wines, by no means exceptionable." Mr. Spencer looked disappointed, and Radcliff feared he had committed himself.

"I must ask leave to differ with you, Mr. Nesbit. I believe, that water is the only beverage not fraught with dangers."

"Then, why place temptation in the path of others,

Mr. Spencer?" enquired Judge Bond. "Is not example far better than precept?"

"If left to my option," he said, with a sad smile, "I would at once renounce it, but Mrs. Spencer thinks otherwise."

"I do not fear its influence, on those whom *I* invite to partake of it," she replied, coldly; "cold water excesses are extremely absurd."

"I shall always uphold mother in that sentiment," remarked young Mr. Spencer, at the same time filling his fifth glass. "Mrs. Frisby, allow me to take wine with you."

"I will fill the glass with pleasure, if I may be allowed to choose my own beverage," she replied, "as my principles never allow any thing of a stronger nature than water."

Young Spencer bowed slightly, and with difficulty suppressed a scornful smile, as he raised a goblet of water to his lips. Mrs. Spencer colored, but said nothing; there was an awkward silence, all parties evidently feeling uncomfortably, until it was broken by Mr. Spencer, who enquired for Mr. Mordecai.

"He is quite ill;" Radcliff replied, "on that account, I must return home early this evening, as the charge of him will devolve principally on my brother and myself; I should not wish my father's rest to be broken."

"Any thing but a sick nurse," said Philip, laughing; "I should die of ennui, at my post."

"The patient would not die of over-attention," his sister replied.

Radcliff felt chagrined, but Mr. Spencer said very gravely, "May you never be cast sick upon strangers, my son, and need their aid. It is a blessing," he continued, "that Mr. Mordecai is with those, who will kindly care for him. I have been making some inquiries respecting him, and find he is a truly estimable young man; much beloved by those who know him, but he is naturally reserved with strangers."

"I would be just as willing to entertain a post-father," remarked Philip. "Often as I have been thrown

into his society, I have seldom extracted from him more than a monosyllable. Then, he is a Jew. I cannot imagine how they have risen to the head of society. His sister was a leader of fashion, before she became a fanatic, married, and brought down her father's anathemas upon her head. I always feel that Jews and old clothes venders, are synonymous."

"They are truly a degraded race," replied Judge Bond, "scattered and peeled, as is foretold, and will remain so until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled; they will then, surely be brought in. Their eyes, now blinded, will be enlightened, and the now rejected Messiah will appear to them as the Prince of peace, the Chief among ten thousand, and One altogether lovely."

"There is little that is prince-like about them, now, I must confess," replied Philip.

The Judge fixed his eyes steadily upon him for some time, then gradually withdrawing them, and resuming the fork he had laid upon his plate, he said, "Beware, young man, lest they should be found where you may seek to enter, and shall not be able."

Young Spencer looked disconcerted for a moment, but soon, with much effrontery, replied, "Pardon me, Judge Bond, when you took up the cudgel for your friends, I supposed it would be in lawyer-like style—systematically; but when you flew from this mundane sphere, to another, I confess it was somewhat beyond my comprehension, and I may have answered irrelevantly."

Judge Bond looked very grave, but did not otherwise notice this sally, and as the sixth and last course was finished, without another remark, the whole party withdrew to the drawing-room. Music was proposed, and Radcliff, after accompanying Miss Spencer in a few songs, and receiving a most cordial invitation to the receptions of Mrs. Spencer, took his leave.

"How much address Mr. Nesbit has," remarked Mrs. Ruchendorf, "his manners would grace a court."

"His appearance would be faultless," said Mrs.

Spencer, "but for that curl of the lip, which gives rather a haughty air."

"Yes," replied Mr. Spencer, "he is indeed very pre-possessing, but I should not judge had the powerful intellect, or independence of his brother Howard. I weighed his mind closely, in reference to this law suit, and have determined to place it in his hands."

"Father!"

"My mind is made up on that point, Philip."

"Well! I am surprised, when such men as La Valetta and Paley, and Rooke are within your reach. Why trust such an important case to nobody?"

"Rather say to an unknown body, Philip; my object is two-fold—to gain my cause by making use of his talents, and bring him into his proper sphere as a lawyer."

"Why! it will be a matter of some fifteen thousand dollars in his pocket. Will it not?"

"Yes; if he gain the suit. If he lose it, he is to receive nothing."

Young Spencer smiled, "A likely story, that any one in your service should go without remuneration."

"That is not left to my option, in this case; Howard Nesbit would receive nothing by favor."

"A very independent gentleman. Has he a private fortune?"

"He has; in talent, and education."

"Money in hand goes along more smoothly with the world; keep me from these empty pocket geniuses."

"Suppose you and Mr. Nesbit enter into a compact, Phil," said his brother John, tapping him on the shoulder, "head for money; eh! Perhaps, both would be the gainers."

"No insinuations, sir," he replied, affecting to join in the laugh raised at his expense by the boys of the party, "quite satisfied with my amount of brains, and no desire to lessen the weight of my pocket."

"I suppose, you think you are about equal," continued his provoking brother, "weighing pockets with heads, and heads with pockets, eh! Now, for my part,

by making my pockets a little lighter, I should like to purchase some of the knowledge of this said Mr. Nesbit, and if father will allow me, when I leave college, I will take possession of a seat in his office, as a law student. What do you say to it, father?"

" You have two years yet to consider your own proposition, John ; you will be eighteen when you leave school, that will give you ample time to study a profession before you are twenty-one."

" He will not require much study," returned Philip, " he pleads the cause now, of every beggar we meet; at least, he and the beggars plead alternately, they to him, and he to me; and I often think, his purse will be about as full as all the rest of the empty-pocket fraternity. John, you are a queer genius, make the best of you."

" In what way do I manifest my querities ?"

" In the first place, by forming associations at school, with those who would not have dared look at me."

" Are you, so majestic ? For instance ?"

" Well ! Alfred Lamont."

" What has *he* ever done to disgrace himself ?"

" His mother holds no place in society ; she merely keeps a boarding-house."

" Is it possible," exclaimed Judge Bond, turning to Mr. Spencer, without noticing Philip's remark, " that Mr. Anthony Lamont is dead ! Where does his widow reside ? I must see her in the morning."

" In Revelle Place," replied Mr. Spencer ; " she is obliged to make great exertions for her children's sake. I will accompany you there early to-morrow."

" He was a noble man, a very dear friend. I thought to have seen him once more," said the Judge, much moved.

Young Spencer was silent, with his eyes fixed upon the floor, as if uncertain what course to pursue, when his brother, archly whispered, " Try it again, Phil, and help the Judge's memory to more old friends. I do not believe he would put his veto on my choice."

" Judge Bond is not infallible," he replied tartly, but in an under tone.

"Henceforth, I shall adopt him as my model," replied John, laughing, "if he always lead me off so victoriously."

A reproving glance from Mr. Spencer, arrested them; and, during the remainder of the evening, Philip sat, with folded arms, entering into no further conversation. As it waned late, the family gradually retired, leaving Mr. Spencer alone in the drawing-room with Philip.

"Father," enquired Philip, "have you any remembrance of Senator Houston?"

"He died, long since; by reputation, I knew him well, but was not aware of his connexion with our present friends; that makes the tie to them doubly strong. To him, we owe all our prosperity."

"We! in what way, possibly?"

"I will tell you. Do you remember that large old fashioned stone house, standing next to Mrs. Lamont's place of residence, in Ravelle street?"

"Perfectly, a splendid mansion, in its day."

"That house, was the dwelling of Senator Houston. The first house built by my grandfather. He was a house carpenter, by the name of Philip Spencer, a name that has descended lineally in my family. He was quite a young man, with little business, and very slender resources, depending on his daily labor, as a journeyman for his support, when a message came, that Mr. Houston desired to see him early the next morning. 'I, of course,' said my grandfather, in relating the story, 'obeyed the summons with great alacrity, and never will forget my kind reception. Mr. Houston, a dignified looking gentleman, in the prime of life, received me in the breakfast-room. His wife, was making the coffee at the table. Shaking hands kindly with me, he drew a chair closely beside the fire, saying, "By reputation, you are well known to me, Mr. Spencer, both as an able workman, and a worthy man; now I want you to exercise your talent in my service, first, as a draughtsman, then, if I approve your plans, I will put the building of my house into your hands." I listened, as though in a dream; to be promoted at once to a

master builder; to realize my fondest hopes; to be in contract for at least forty thousand dollars. It was too much; I started to my feet, and, forgetting the wide distance between us, grasped his hand. I attempted to speak, but could not. Placing his other hand kindly upon mine, he said, "Be composed, my dear sir; I know it is an important matter for a young man beginning business, to obtain at once, so good an opening; I therefore understand your excitement; but sit down, take a cup of coffee with us, and I will enter more fully into particulars when you are composed." I hesitated, but Mrs. Houston reassured me entirely, by saying, "Yes, Mr. Spencer, I want your opinion of my new coffee, a bag just received from Java." I assented, and never passed a more pleasant hour, forgetful that I was in the society of some of the great of the earth, and afterwards, had the gratification of hearing, that I was pronounced a young man of excellent parts, with evidently a cultivated mind. You know, Phil," my grandfather added, 'the Scotch people never send their children adrift, without education, and my parents gave me good schooling, and a substantial trade, before they sent me to seek my fortune on this side of the water.' Well! the end of my story, Philip, is this. My grandfather rose upon this house, and left thirty thousand dollars to my father, when he died, who, you know, became one of the largest merchants of Varastone, and at his death, bequeathed a far larger fortune to me than will be good for my children to possess."

During this recital, the deep color that mounted to the very temples of young Spencer, showed his appreciation of the humble birth of his ancestor. He sat motionless for some time after his father had finished speaking, then, affecting a careless manner, he asked, "Did Judge Bond know your grandfather, sir?"

"Perfectly, and held him in high esteem."

There was a pause, when Philip, hesitatingly enquired, "Do you think it probable, he will mention his profession to our guests?"

"The deeds of such a man, Philip Spencer, ought to be written in letters of gold on tables of stone. I revere his name, whatever may be your estimate of him."

"If you have so great a veneration for his name, father," he replied, with a slight curl of the lip, "why did you not allow me to come to the knowledge of my high descent before."

"It was the weakness of a parent, I confess; I saw your indomitable pride from a child, and with mistaken fondness, felt unwilling to wound you. But this day, Philip, my spirit has been mortified beyond all bounds by your absurd presumption. I saw Judge Bond looked upon you as thoroughly contemptible."

"Let him form what opinion he may," replied Philip, rising, and pacing the floor rapidly; "my standing is certainly not so precarious that his approval or disapproval will affect it."

"I would seek a better foundation than wealth can bestow," returned Mr. Spencer, pausing, with his hand upon the knob, as he was about leaving the apartment, "when assuming so lofty a position."

The door closed, and young Spencer was left alone. Throwing himself into a chair, he sat for hours with folded arms, and eyes bent upon the floor. The word "Carpenter!" several times escaped him. Suddenly, recollecting himself, he arose, and retired to his own chamber. There his imagined degradation still haunted him. Judge Bond, on the morrow, was to make a visit to the Nesbits. Would all be revealed to them? "A carpenter! a mechanic—the grandfather of Philip Spencer! Would that I had never been born! I will escape to foreign shores, where my name will be unknown. A carpenter!" Burying his face in his pillow, he was unconscious that the sun had risen far above the horizon, and was shining brightly through his casement. He arose, unrefreshed and miserable, and, at the sound of the second bell, descended to the breakfast table. Not so, Radcliff Nesbit; with bounding heart he wended his way towards Grangeville. He had missed the stage, and was obliged to return home on foot; but

what mattered it? He was in a mood to be pleased with everything; he had gained a most important point—not only obtained access to one of the most exclusive houses in Varastone, but was conscious of having made a favorable impression. If it were not so, why was so cordial an invitation given him to the receptions. To Mrs. Spencer's receptions! That was rather beyond his expectations. Then came in the Senator so apropos. But my *business*; just at visiting hours, How unfortunate! I must find excuses for absenting myself sometimes. And Miss Spencer—she is certainly very pretty; very lovely. Who knows,—he stopped, frightened at his own temerity, even in thought. It was not framed into words, when he reached the door of the friend with whom Cornelia was staying. He determined to pass the remainder of the evening there, as he would feel more affinity than with his family. At eleven o'clock he returned home, and finding a small lamp burning for him in the hall, he went quietly to his own chamber, and soon fell into a dreamy slumber, where visions of bridal gifts and gay apparel floated before his imagination, and was only dissipated by a loud knocking at his door, summoning him to breakfast. He arose hastily, contrary to his usual custom, and his morning salutation, as he entered the room, was far more pleasant than was his wont.

On the same day, the promised visits of the Spencers was duly made, and Judge Bond gladly assented to the proposal of Mr. Houston, that he would remain a few days with him. Many were the pleasant reminiscences of by-gone times; a tear also was dropped at the remembrance of some dear friend, whose mortal had put on immortality. Rapidly, indeed, did time roll by, and at the close of the week, a most reluctant farewell was taken—a farewell, probably, for time, but with the assured hope of a re-union in eternity.

A kindly message was sent by Mr. Houston to Mr. Spencer, that he had loved him before for his own sake, but as the grandson of his dear friend, whose

memory he had always revered, the tie would be doubly strong. The deep confusion of young Spencer, when the message was delivered at the dinner-table, was a subject of wonder to Judge Bond, nor could he possibly have divined the cause, as he had often felt regret, that one of the descendants of Philip Spencer had so sadly deteriorated.

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## CHAPTER IV.

“Moreover, in thy day of grief,  
For friends, or fame, or fortune,  
Well ! I wot the heart shall ache,  
And mind be numbed in torpor.”

“HERE comes Mr. Ryers up the front yard, he must have walked from the stage office,” observed Howard Nesbit, as he sat at the parlor window. The person remarked upon, came in immediately after—a gentleman of very respectable appearance and dignified bearing; the cordial greetings of Major Nesbit and Howard, were as cordially returned. Mr. Ryers then enquired for his pupils.

“They have been sent to their grandfathers, to remain a few days. We have a young gentleman with us, extremely ill; the disease, we fear, will terminate fatally, and we thought it better the children should not witness so sad a scene.”

“Can I be of service here, Major Nesbit; or shall I meet the children at Mr. Houston’s, until their return home?”

“I intended suggesting it, Mr. Ryers, if not objectionable to you,” replied Major Nesbit. Mr. Ryers, bowing, said it would not make the slightest difference to him.

“Then, I will drive you over, sir,” said Howard; “I am only waiting for the poor fellow’s sleigh; it broke down on his way from Rocklyn, the night of the storm,

and he accepted refuge here. The sleigh has been repaired, and, at his request, the horses brought here to be used by our family. He is a perfect stranger to us ; his name is Mordecai ; he is a son of Solomon Mordecai, the great banker ;" the sound of bells drew the attention of the three gentlemen to the window.

"Jump in, Mr. Ryers," said Howard, buttoning his great coat, and then advancing to take the reins from Hogan.

"You will excuse my preference for walking, Mr. Howard. I assure you, it would fatigue me far more to go in the sleigh."

"I once contended against Radcliff, that Mr. Ryers broached no sentiment he could not make valid," said Howard, "but really, in this case, I should be forced to yield. You have already walked a mile over half beaten roads, and expect us to believe it will rest you to retrace your steps."

"I still retain my preference for pedestrianism," he replied, very politely, but positively.

In less than a minute, the sleigh, with its solitary passenger was lost to the view of the traveller, wrapped in a heavy cloak, wending his way through untracked snow (save where his own foot had before fallen) to the same point. Howard could not but think Mr. Ryers was obstinate, very obstinate, and said so, when he announced his coming, a long while before he arrived, cold and wearied at Mr. Houston's. The lessons were interspersed with anecdotes of Mr. Mordecai, and expressions of sorrow for his sickness. "He is so kind," said little Hattie, "he told us such beautiful stories one evening, and taught us our lessons, and he bought those splendid baskets of fruit, and he told mother not to mention his name ; you won't tell on him, will you ? he would not mind your knowing I guess, for you are just the same as one of ourselves ; are you not, Mr. Ryers ?"

"What, Hatty dear ? Yes, I am coming every day till the gentleman goes home," he replied, rousing from a reverie.

"That will be nice," exclaimed the child, forgetting her own question in the new idea of Mr. Ryers coming daily to grandfather's.

"Mr. Mordecai is a Jew," whispered Houston, drawing closely beside the tutor. "Did you ever see a real Jew?"

"The real best Jews always turn Christians," was the answer. "Perhaps this gentleman will sometime." Houston looked perplexed, but Mr. Ryers recalling his attention to his books, the subject of the Jew was dismissed. Each succeeding day found Mr. Ryers punctually at his post, and each day the invalid at the house of Major Nesbit became worse.

"No means yet of obtaining the whereabouts of his father?" enquired Dr. Rodgers one morning, as the family had gathered in a circle, after hearing his opinion that "the patient would surely and shortly die."

"No," said Major Nesbit, "the domestics left in charge of the house could give Howard no certain information; the only old family servant is traveling with the master."

"Rather unfortunate," returned the doctor, recrossing his feet, which were planted against the mantel, as he lolled in an arm chair. "Who is to watch to-night?"

"Ryers offered, but Howard had previously engaged a young friend of his own. It would be almost too much to accept of Mr. Ryers with his constant occupation through the day."

"Howard is made of quite as perishable material," observed Radcliff. "It is my opinion he ought to have a nurse."

"Afraid of your turn?" said the doctor, with a quiet provoking laugh. "A nurse can do but little in such a case." He was interrupted by the humble bow of Hogan at the door. "A lady in the hall requests to see Mrs. Nesbit or Miss Marion."

"I will return before dinner," said the doctor, stretching himself, and slowly pushing the chair from the fire. As he passed from the room, the lady visiter entered with Marion. "Mr. Mordecai's sister," said the latter, placing a chair near her mother for the stranger. Mrs.

Nesbit took her hand in her own kind manner, and replied softly to a whispered enquiry, "Yes, very ill, but we trust the palliatives given will be beneficial to him. At present he does not recognize any one."

"Our father is from home; who will sustain him in this sorrow?" A violent flood of weeping held her a short space. Making a great effort to be composed, she asked to be taken to her brother.

"I suppose," said Radcliff, "that is the disowned daughter; she is very beautiful, but entirely unlike her brother."

"Yes," replied Cornelia, carelessly, "she has an interesting appearance, her face I can scarcely give judgment upon. Eleanor Rogers told me all about her apostacy, and consequent banishment from her home. She was received into the house of Mr. Wields, an Episcopal clergyman, who is a friend of Dr. Rodgers; his wife related all the circumstances to Ellie. She represented her as perfectly lovely. It seems as soon as she acknowledged her conversion to Christianity, her father loaded her with curses, bidding her never enter the homestead, unless she renounced heresy, and had her portrait turned towards the wall, her chamber windows closed, the door locked, and the anathemas of the synagogue laid upon her. Her brother too turned against her, but never has gone into any society since; receives no company. They are both denied to all visitors, the father and son live together in perfect seclusion."

"Yet, Nellie, he was on a sleighing excursion when I met him at the Vulcan."

"Not voluntarily," returned his sister. "He told father his horses were invited with him, and neither liking to refuse or to lend them, he resolved to join the party to prevent their being injured by unskilful driving, though such excursions were very contrary to his taste and habits."

"Well, Nellie, does the sister still reside with the rector?"

"No, she accompanied an invalid to Europe as a

companion. Mrs. Wields has since heard of the death of the lady, and the same medium mentioned the marriage of the beautiful Jewess; it was supposed she had settled on the other side of the Atlantic, but that is not the case it appears."

"What an old Turk the father must be, and the son is not far behind him!"

"Turk or Christain are equally uncongenial to a Jew," said Major Nesbit, arrested by the remark of Radcliff, as he laid down his book; "their abhorence to either will overcome all natural affection, and Mordecai could not consistently, with any respect for Judaism, notice an apostate, although he is obviously keenly suffering from this estrangement."

"Well, mother," exclaimed Cornelia, as Mrs. Nesbit came into the room, "how did Mr. Mordecai receive his sister? Did he notice her?"

"No, dear; his mind still wanders; she is sitting on the side of his bed with her hand resting on his; I never witnessed more bitter grief," and Mrs. Nesbit wiped the eyes already swollen with weeping. "She is very lovely," she continued. "Once when he murmured the name of Miriam, she leaned over him and said very softly, but distinctly, 'brother.' Then with clasped hands she stood breathlessly awaiting a possible recognition, but he only muttered 'Nazarene, Nazarene.' A dark scowl passing over his features, 'his blood be upon us, upon us.' 'Say his atoning blood, my own, my only brother,' she whispered eagerly. He gazed wildly around, as if endeavoring to comprehend, then closed his eyes seemingly to sleep. Neither has spoken since; she is sorely stricken, poor, dear child. She declined any offer of rest or refreshment, and she certainly needs both."

"Did Hogan say how she came here, mother?"

"She came in a carriage, which she directed should return for her in an hour. She since requested your aunt Harriet to dismiss it until this time to-morrow."

"Is it possible that frail-looking being can think of

sitting up all night after the fatigue she has already endured, Mary?" asked Major Nesbit.

"She will be sustained by her intense anxiety, it will be useless to try to dissuade her. Harriet proposes remaining with her, and for that purpose will take some rest during the day. Marion and I will stay with her till evening."

"Oh! mother," eagerly enquired Cornelia, starting from her chair, "do you fear he is very near his end? If so, I would like Rad to take me over to grandfather's."

"I confess I do not perceive such immediate danger of a fatal result; but, Cornelia, it is surprising to me, you are so unwilling to bear any portion of our burden. Why is it you form so strong a contrast to your sister?"

"Why, mother, we are so very differently constituted and educated, how can we be expected to follow or enjoy the same pursuits? We have hardly a thought in common. You sometimes smile yourself at sister's old fashioned notions, and queer, quaint sayings."

"Seldom other than commendatory, Nellie; your sister is quite content to adorn her home; your brilliancy must be reflected elsewhere; I would it were not so, from my heart."

Cornelia blushed, but instantly rallying, said: "I really could not be satisfied to sit all day by the side of a sick strange Jew, mother."

Radcliff laughed, his father frowned, Mrs. Nesbit replied: "The sick Jew's sister may have an opportunity of evincing her gratitude in a similar way for Marion. I trust if either of your brothers are ever so situated, Cornelia, they may not meet with nurses of your constitution and education. I may seem severe, daughter, but your heartlessness distresses me."

Cornelia felt mortified, and cried with vexation; Mrs. Nesbit returned to the library, Radcliff following her from the room. "I suppose, mother," he remarked, "my courtesy will be thought as equivocal as Nellie's kindness, if I make no proffer of services to Miss Mordecai, or whatever her name may be."

"There is no mere courtesy required, Radcliff," his mother replied very coldly, "the young lady is not in circumstances to notice the absence of it, I certainly will excuse it."

"Cornelia says she is married, mother," he continued without noticing the reproof, "did you ask her address?"

"No,—she has not corrected our 'Miss Mordecai,' therefore I judge Cornelia's informant is mistaken."

"Very likely, Elinor Rodgers though is generally reliable, the Doctor subscribes to all her versions, and he is critically truthful;" Radcliff just then remembered he had promised to give John Spencer a lesson on fencing. Leaving his mother at the library door, he passed through the hall.

Major Nesbit, left with his daughter, remained quietly reading, until she arose to leave the room; then laying down the book, he said, very sternly, "I have a few words to say to you, Cornelia," she turned, and stood, hesitatingly, "sit down here," he said, pointing to a chair opposite to himself, "and convince me if you can, that it is proper your mother, aunt, and sister, should be entirely unaided by you, in their several occupations; and why at this time particularly, is one of my daughters so ready, and the other so unwilling, to render assistance."

There was no reply.

"Listen to me, Cornelia," he continued, rising and standing before the seat she had taken, "I know it is not in my power to alter a selfish, self-willed temper; but I have authority, and will use it, in directing your conduct. I desire you will take the entire charge of the house, while your mother, and Marion, are otherwise employed. It is not obligatory you should ever enter the room of the stranger, but it will enable those of more strength of nerve, to give him their unremitting attention, if relieved by you from their other duties; and until I see a cheerful acquiescence to my arrangements, you and I have not a single interchange of thoughts. You understand me, Cornelia?"

She was silent.

"You understand me, Cornelia?" he repeated very sternly, and raising his voice.

"Yes, father," she replied, bursting into tears.

"I wish I could believe those were tears of penitence, daughter, but I am assured they are only the effect of your repugnance to my wishes; but I change not, until the reformation in you is very evident," he moved towards the door.

"Father, do not go away angry with me; indeed I will try to do better," she cried out, imploringly.

"The fruits of the amendment will very soon restore you to my favor, my child," he replied, returning a few steps into the room, "but I must witness these, before I listen to any promises of contrition, tears are not always proof of repentance;" Mr. Nesbit left her.

Cornelia could not control herself sufficiently to enter at once upon her allotted avocations, but determined she would endeavor to regain her father's good opinion; him she really loved, and respected, and felt his displeasure would be unendurable; a reproof from him was so unusual; her mother forgave so easily, and was so indulgent, she did not mind offending her or Marion.

Aunt Harriet coming in, enquired "What had occurred to occasion her tears?" Nellie waived the question, by asking "whether she should make the dessert for her?"

"I was going to the kitchen for that very purpose, Nellie," she replied, "and will be very glad if you will prepare it for me, for I am required in the room of Mr. Mordecai, constantly, and Marion has headache."

"How is he now, Auntie?"

"Sleeping, dear; that lovely sister of his soothed all that restlessness by warbling Hebrew verses—the very first note wrought magically; his excited nerves relaxed, his whole frame became composed, and now he is sleeping like an infant, he speaks as from pleasant dreams, his very countenance is serene. I do trust all this is favorable; how terrible is her suspense."

"Does she converse with you at all, Aunt Hattie?"

"That room would be no fit place for conversation, Nellie; but she never utters a word unless in reply, excepting a whisper to her brother, occasionally; once she turned to us and said, 'his mind reverts to years gone by; he is talking to me, as when we were children together;' we observe he continually calls, to, and for, Miriam, and that is her name. There is Doctor Rodgers, I did not expect him so soon. Do not forget the dessert, Nellie."

Miss Houston met Dr. Rodgers, and accompanied him to his patient; "Miss Mordecai, doctor," she said, in reply to his look of surprise, as he moved towards the bed.

"This sleep argues favorably, sir?" asked his sister, anxiously.

"Sometimes the patient awakes greatly improved; oftener, never."

The sudden agony depicted on one face there, was not visible to the others; burying it against her brother's pillow, she suppressed her emotion, which, anywhere else, would have found vent in groans of anguish. Miss Houston heard his reply, and bending over her, laid her hand on hers, as she gently said, "Thy brother shall live again; can you not trust the life of yours in His hands?"

"Lazarus was the friend of Jesus," she answered, raising her head and resting it on the shoulder of Miss Houston.

"So are you, and Jesus loves you, and I firmly believe will restore your brother to you, and to Himself also."

The tears of the mourner now flowed freely; Miss Houston still whispering to her, words of scripture cordial, while the doctor was giving directions, that Mr. Mordecai might not be disturbed by his voice, in a remote corner of the room. When he had gone, Mrs. Nesbit told Miss Houston and Marion they had better go take some rest, to be ready for the night's vigils, as Dr. Rodgers thought it advisable to avoid having too many with the patient at the same time. Miss Houston

placing her arm around Miss Mordecai and kissing her tenderly, bid her "be of good cheer." She made no other response than to press the hand of Miss Houston nervously between her own ; she then returned to the side of the unconscious sleeper. Evening and morning found her there, for several successive days, and it was only when the frail frame became overpowered, her head would sink on the side of the bed, and she would slumber a few moments. Each day a carriage was sent for her, but always returned with the same message—"Perhaps I will come to morrow." Dr. Rodgers saw, "No encouraging symptoms." Mr. Mordecai slept almost continually ; if aroused, his reason wandered, and his speech was quite incoherent.

Another day passed—evening came ; the mellow rays of a beautiful moon, beaming through the windows, seemed to invite admiration, but even nature had no charms for the devoted watcher ; with an overcharged heart, she stood there, recalling their companionship of infancy, of childhood—those days of merriment, those years of affection, of unclouded happiness—now sundered ; sundered, the word rose to her lips—"sundered forever!" she ejaculated. Her voice aroused him ; a long pause ensued—he gazed wildly over the room—he seemed to be making an effort to collect his thoughts—he raised his hand to his forehead, but it feebly fell upon his chest ; again his dark eyes wandered around, then they settled vaguely upon his sister: "Mother," he said, very distinctly, "does Miriam expect me to go for her ? lay your hand upon my head, mother, it feels strangely ; bathe my head, mother, dear—father will bring Miriam home, I am weary—w<sup>e</sup>ary—" the last words died away upon his lips ; he again slept. There was little consciousness of weariness in her who bent for hours over him, bathing his temples and head. How fervently did she pray for his return to life, as she would lay her cheek upon his forehead ; at length entirely overcome by the intensity of her feelings, she exclaimed, "Lemuel, my beloved brother, speak once again, to tell me you still love me ; call me once again

your darling Miriam ; speak, Lemuel, in pity speak to your banished, your deeply wronged sister."

Mrs. Nesbit alarmed for the probable consequences, hastily, though gently, drew her from the bedside, seating her in a shaded part of the room, she whispered, "Excitement might, indeed would, be ruinous; be calm, if possible; you have borne so much, poor child, but try to compose yourself: he is speaking; it is better he should not see you at present—he is bewildered; I will go to him."

Miss Mordecai, now quite passive, remained upon the sofa, eagerly listening. He asked for water; (how she longed to carry it to him.) He enquired, "Where he was—if he had been ill—what length of time." Mrs. Nesbit satisfied him, "You have been ill," she said, "but we hope to see you quite well, very soon now—the fever has been subdued; you require only to be kept quiet, with a little more good nursing." He would have replied, but Mrs. Nesbit begged he would make no exertions to do so, telling him she "perfectly understood all he desired to say, but that his acknowledgments of gratitude might be deferred until his strength returned. Moreover," she added, "there will be a division requisite; I may not justly appropriate all."

Mr. Mordecai smiled, and closing his hand over hers, enquired, "Is my father here?"

"Not yet, but doubtless will be, in a few days." Then withdrawing her hand, to avoid other questions, she slowly moved towards the sister; "go, my dear, to the room above this, and seek rest," she whispered, "the crisis is past, I believe all danger is over."

Miss Mordecai, covering her face with her hands, wept.

"Go, my child," continued Mrs. Nesbit, still in a whisper, "go, weep thankfully, weep rejoicingly, for he will be restored to life, and to you."

Throwing her arms round Mrs. Nesbit's neck, she murmured, "Pray that we may be once again united, doubly united in the blessed bonds of Christianity."

The "Lord bless you my child," fell soothingly on her stricken heart ; she said no more, and left the room.

Mrs. Nesbit had not been long seated by the side of the invalid, when Howard joined her ; he observed the improvement in the patient, and easily prevailed on her to seek the rest she had recommended to Miss Mordecai. Meeting Marion at the door, she stopped her, saying, "You are no longer required in the sick room, daughter ; bestow all your attention, now, on the afflicted sister ; she, of course, will avoid that room, as the reason of her brother has returned, and a meeting would be very hazardous to him."

"Where is Miss Mordecai, mother?"

"In the north room, dear ; perhaps you had better remain with her to-night ; if she do not need you, return to your own chamber ; I have left Howard with Mr. Mordecai, and will meet you at breakfast ; good night, daughter."

Marion returned the kiss of her mother, and repaired to the room of Miss Mordecai. All was still and undisturbed till morning.

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## CHAPTER V.

"Yea, though the breath of disappointment  
Should chill the sanguine heart,  
Speedily gloweth it again,  
Warmed by the live embers of hope."

"I have two letters for you, father," said Howard next morning. "Mr. Ryers brought them over last night, or rather he sent them by the person who brought the carriage, at early dawn, to carry Miss Mordecai home. The accompanying note of Ryers says, they were given him at Rocklyn yesterday. One is from the principal clerk of Mr. Mordecai, the other from his physician, Dr. Lcdi."

"Ryers has been indefatigable," observed Mr. Nesbit; "I do believe he has been to Rocklyn almost every day, to obtain tidings of the father; he certainly has a very kind heart."

"He is a true Christian, father; I consider him a perfect model. This would be a very different world were there many such. But now for the letters," at the same time handing them to his father.

"Read them, Howard, I have not my glasses."

"*Rocklyn, 16 inst.*

"**MAJOR NESBIT:**

"**SIR:**—I am directed by Mr. Solomon Mordecai, to say to you, that so soon as his distracted nerves will admit, he will be with his son at your house. Mr. Mordecai was told very abruptly of his son's extreme illness, by a servant, before there was any opportunity to hand him your letters, which would have prepared him, for the sorrowful intelligence; his physician thinks by to-morrow or next day, he may safely leave home; Dr. Lodi will accompany him.

"**Your Obt. Servt.,**

"**DAVID VANCE.**"

"What is the date, Howard?"

"Yesterday; you may expect them to-morrow, mother. I will read what the Doctor has to say."

"*Rocklyn, 16 Dec.*

"**MAJOR NESBIT:**

"**DEAR SIR:**—At the suggestion, or rather at the solicitation of Mr. Solomon Mordecai, (my brother-in-law,) I have consented to meet the visiting physician of his son, at your house, and consult with him relative to the case. Will you say to your physician, I will hear his opinion to-day or to-morrow. Mr. Solomon Mordecai is overflowing with gratitude to you and your family, sir, for your great kindness and attention to his idolised son.

"With great respect,

"**PAUL LODI.**

"There is a great deal of refinement in that note," Howard remarked, as he closed and passed it to his father; "Dr. Rodgers had better be prepared for his visitor, he may make some of his sharp, uncouth speeches, and frighten the stranger."

"Perhaps you had better go over, dear, and announce the intended consultation."

"Too late, mother," replied Howard, laughing, "there is his carriage."

"Well; what sort of night have you had?" he inquired, walking in advance of Major Nesbit, who had opened the door for him; "how is the Israelite?" He threw his hat and gloves on one chair, and drawing another near the table, asked Mrs. Nesbit for a cup of coffee.

"Your patient is much better this morning, doctor," said that lady, as she gave the coffee to Hogan for him; "he is quite rational, and entirely free from fever; we expect his father here to-day, and his family physician writes to proffer a consultation with you at the father's request; will it be necessary?"

"Not much subject for consultation, if the patient is getting well, unless to toss him back upon the sick list," replied the doctor, returning his cup to be re-filled.

"Who is he, anyhow?"

"Dr. Paul Lodi, of Rocklyn University,"

"Whew,"—he exclaimed, drawing his napkin from the diagonal corners across his mouth. "Paul Lodi! he stands chief in the faculty; lucky the case is on the mend; I will go in and look at Mordecai. Is he aware of this proposed visit?"

"No; nor of that of his father."

"No! well use great caution in giving the information; he is still exceedingly feeble. How came that sister of his here? I thought they were at sword's points."

"Miss Mordecai very prudently withdrew as soon as she noticed returning reason. Circumstances only have separated them; I do not believe there is the least

diminution of affection. Please, doctor, do not name her to him."

"I should be puzzled to do so, as I am unacquainted with it, and at no time given to meddling with the affairs of others. Ellen is quite exercised to know how she found out he was here and sick."

"She has not said, and has not been asked," replied Miss Houston; "the villagers will discover, if queries will do it; nothing remains untold here, very long. I suppose her desire to remain in obscurity is owing to the great contrast in her present and former condition in life; hers is a noble spirit crushed. To me, there is something fascinating about her."

"Marion thinks she belongs to the spirit world," observed Cornelia; "for my part, I think she is very foolish, to give herself so much pain, and fatigue, for one so ungracious, and ungrateful; such a brother would not get much attention from me."

"Shall I say to Mr. Mordecai you are here, doctor?" asked Mrs. Nesbit, without noticing Cornelia's remarks.

He nodded assent.

A bright smile met her as she opened the room-door of the invalid; "I am really enjoying this cream toast, my dear Mrs. Nesbit," he said, "how much better I feel, although excessively weak."

"And I really enjoy seeing you take it with appetite," she replied; "is there any thing I can do for you beside prepare nourishment? Is there any friend you would like sent for?"

"Letters are awaiting my father?"

"Yes—but would you like any other relative, or friend, sent for. If you desire to see your own physician, with Dr. Rodgers, do not suppose it would give us trouble; far otherwise."

"I am perfectly satisfied with your physician, Mrs. Nesbit. As a friend, it would be pleasant to be visited by Dr. Lodi; as a patient, the skill of Dr. Rodgers needs no support."

"Dr. Rodgers is here—and Mr. Nesbit has a letter

from Dr. Lodi, most respectfully offering to meet him to-day in consultation."

"Dr. Lodi is the brother of my mother; I shall be happy to see my *uncle*: *Dr. Rodgers* is my *physician* while at Grangeville."

Howard, half opened the door to ask if the doctor might be admitted. Mrs. Nesbit, laughing, drew aside to give place to Dr. Rodgers, who protested, the ladies had entirely over-reached him, that "Mr. Mordecai was getting well without his knowing how."

"Strict adherence to your prescriptions, sir, and unremitting watchfulness, have wrought my restoration; how shall I ever be able to evince my gratitude to you all?"

"I shall pass you into the hands of Dr. Lodi, of Rocklyn, to-day, my young friend; do not look a dissent; I am entirely satisfied so to do; he is a man of consummate skill."

"Dr. Rodgers," replied Mr. Mordecai, with more strength of voice than he appeared capable of evincing. "I remain your patient until removed to Rocklyn. I reverence Dr. Lodi, and fully appreciate his medical judgment; I love him as a relative and friend, and I can assure you, he would be the last man to intrude upon the rights of another. I shall be happy to be the medium of your acquaintance, but as averse to so suddenly breaking up ours."

"I have never met Dr. Lodi in a room," returned Dr. Rodgers, evidently much pleased, "but have often heard him lecture. I should judge, his practice would be to him a very secondary consideration. I am gratified, that you are inclined to continue under my charge. I will leave directions with the ladies; and Mrs. Nesbit," he continued, turning towards her, "you will despatch Hogan for me when Dr. Lodi arrives, I shall be pleased to hear his opinion in this case."

"Bravo, Marion," exclaimed Howard, going into the breakfast-room, after seeing the doctor to the door; "he has gone off delighted with every body, and every thing; the consultation with Dr. Lodi, has tickled the

old gentleman's vanity, instead of offending him; I did not anticipate so pleasant a result."

"The doctor has been very attentive," she replied. "I should be sorry his feelings were wounded, but I truly regret the attentions of one, who has ministered to him throughout his illness, will not be recognized and appreciated."

"Yet, it is her own expressed desire she may not be named to him, I believe, Marion."

"True, brother; but why are we to appropriate the gratitude due to her? We did little, comparatively for his comfort. She knows so well all his fancies and tastes; we could not possibly have thought of the restoratives she suggested. Humanly speaking, to her he owes his recovery."

"It would be all in vain, my little sister, to attempt to melt the heart of a rigidly, conscientious Jew, towards an apostate. I had a conversation with Ryers on this very subject. He told me, he had knowledge of a family, where, without the least diminution of affection, one of its members was discarded, disowned, and anathematised from principle. They firmly hold, an apostate from Judaism is accursed of God; and though hearts, may be, and are broken, they resist every natural impulse, and strictly adhere to their law."

The large grey eyes of Marion were full of thought, as she listened to Howard, but she did not reply.

"Are you not satisfied, all efforts to reconcile Mordecai to his sister, would be unavailing?"

"Not until I find my own fruitless, brother. If Providence grant me the opportunity, I shall not neglect it. Mr. Mordecai's politeness will ensure me a listener," she added with a thoughtful smile.

Howard shook his head, and handing his sister a small book he had been ruling for her, arose to leave the room.

"Howard," said Marion, as he opened the door, "Miss Mordecai has a noble, though a crushed spirit, a sensitively affectionate heart, and withal a carefully cultivated intellect; surely, when he apprehends that

that sister nursed him so tenderly, night after night, he will be led to think upon her character, and rejoice to receive her again as a boon from Heaven; he would have a heart of flint to turn from her then: I have determined, I will try, Howard."

"Do dear. Would all the world were of the spirit of my sister Marion," he said, kissing her on both cheeks.

"Good-bye," she called from the window; "tell the children they can come home to-morrow." If all the world were like my brother Howard," she murmured, as she closed the window, "there would be no family happiness wrecked—no glad spirit saddened."

"Oh! Marion, are you here?" Cornelia asked pettishly, looking into the room; "I have been searching for you all over the house; I do wish you would attend to things for me to-day. Mother says, Mr. Mordecai is so much better, she will not need you; his sister, too, has gone. I do so much wish to take a drive with the Spencers."

"I will be glad, Nellie, to oblige you, but you know my sewing is sadly behind hand; I had expected to lessen its bulk to day," she replied, with such a sweet smile.

"Oh never mind your needle-work to-day; do, deary, just go iron those sleeves and collars for me, and Hattie's aprons. I will help you sew some other time."

"Very well," was the answer, "I will iron them for you."

"Do not say a word about them to mother, Marion."

"No, unless she is curious; what then, Nellie?"

"Not likely; she is engaged with the Jew."

"Nellie!" said her sister, reproachfully."

"Oh! I forgot, I promised father—well, with Mr. Mordecai—and will not remember she told me to do them; at any rate I will bear the reprimand, if you will undertake them."

"I do not mind the work, Nellie, but dislike the concealment from mother." Marion with a sigh, saw her thoughtless sister disappear, to make arrangements for the excursion.

The articles were nicely ironed, and Marion busily employed "lessening," as she termed it, "the bulk of her sewing," her father reading to her, as was his custom when his daughters were disengaged in the forenoon, when Dr. Lodi was announced. He came alone.

"What a plain card!" observed Marion; "Paul Lodi, written with a lead pencil."

Major Nesbit, after adjusting his neck-cloth, proceeded to the parlor. A rather thick-set person, decidedly Jewish, came forward to receive his courteous salutation, returning it with equal grace and ease.

"Lemuel Mordecai is very much better, your servant tells me, Major Nesbit?"

"He is, Dr. Lodi, and is impatiently awaiting your appearance. I will show you to his room, or rather to the library, where he has been during his illness."

"Is Dr. Rodgers here?"

"No, sir; but will be shortly; he has been advised of your visit."

"You will allow me to speak with him here, before seeing Lemuel."

"Medical etiquette, I suppose," said Major Nesbit, quite amused at the manner of the doctor, and reseating himself.

"Some of the profession are very tenacious; I hold all to be so, until I discover the contrary. In several instances, I have forgotten myself, and have been severely admonished of my offence, by never being again asked by those M. D.'s, in consultation," he stroked his hand over his face, rubbing his chin as he spoke, and displaying a countenance of such mock gravity, to Major Nesbit, that irresistibly, he laughed aloud.

"I would venture a trifling stake, Dr. Lodi has arrived," said Mr. Mordecai; "that hearty laugh of Major Nesbit, betokens his presence."

"I understood you to say your uncle is a very grave man."

"Remarkably so, Mrs. Nesbit; but no one else can be so where he is; yet, it is all in his manner; nothing he says can be retold except to disadvantage."

"He has been accustomed to a great deal of the best society, I judge."

"Courted by all circles, yet disliking it; an inveterate reader, with a very retentive memory, so that he has the benefit of many other minds, Dr. Lodi is a great man, in the best sense of the word; benevolent, kind, conscientious, just, frank and independent. My father thinks him too liberal in his religious views; he always sustains the character of Jesus of Nazareth as entirely without blemish, and regards him as raised up to be a pattern to suffering virtue, as an example of patience and fortitude to those who sorrow in this world; as a teacher of good, but not as an offering for sin sent from the God of Israel."

Mrs. Nesbit sighed, and replied sadly, "Both or neither, my dear Mr. Mordecai; the admission that the Christian's Saviour is a perfect man, renders it obligatory to admit Him into the Trinity. He himself claimed it; if illegally, the excellency of that character is completely marred."

"Certainly, and therefore I consider him.—"

"For my sake," interrupted Mrs. Nesbit, "do not avow your sentiments, until you have given more attentive thought to the subject. Oh! that you would consent to read the New Testament, with one or more of its advocates, then judge fairly of Him who claims to be your Messiah."

"I would do much for your sake, my almost mother, but I am hardly prepared to promise the perusal of that work."

"But, you will not refuse me, when I entreat you not to speak against Him whom I recognize as my atoning sacrifice, my Redeemer, my only Hope of salvation."

He felt the appeal, and said very solemnly, "I will never, no never."

"Let me arrange your pillows, Mr. Mordecai, they are uncomfortable, surely."

"Will you not call me Lemuel, and not Mr. Mordecai; you will perhaps, think me very wicked,

when I tell you I sometimes envy your sons their mother."

"Quite room in my heart for another son," she answered, laughing, "but I think my son Lemuel, I shall deserve a rebuke from the doctors, if I allow you to fatigue yourself talking, so I shall now leave you to ruminate till the arrival of the faculty."

They did arrive before the lapse of many minutes, Major Nesbit with them.

The countenance of young Mordecai lighted as his uncle approached him. Their greetings were in Hebrew. The doctor then repeated a psalm, in the same language, the nephew occasionally responding; he sat upon the side of the bed, his hand tightly held between those of the invalid.

"Dr. Rodgers, you have done well for our boy," he at length said, turning towards that gentleman, without leaving the seat he had taken; "there is little need to question the pulse, it would not dare beat versus to that health sparkle in the eye. Why, my dear boy, you look far more your former self, than the Ulie of late years." A deep shadow passed over the face of young Mordecai, the eyes of Dr. Lodi sought the ground, the other gentleman remained awkwardly silent; after a brief interval, Dr. Lodi asked in a low voice, "Do you not concur with me, Dr. Rodgers, that much time will elapse before the recovery of his ordinary strength?"

"Some weeks, certainly, sir; his constitution has had a terrible wrench, but the good nursing, and society here, will eventually re-establish his health. Do you propose being his visiting physician during the time, Dr. Lodi?"

"Whatever disposition I may have had, my good sir, to do so, this nephew of mine would veto; and I really frankly confess, he cannot do better than retain his present adviser. Excuse my prescribing, Ulie."

"It is a prescription I shall assuredly follow," he replied, affectionately resting his hand upon the knee of Dr. Lodi.

"So soon as it safely can be done, our patient shall

be removed to a more comfortable apartment," observed Major Nesbit.

"My occupying this must have occasioned you a great deal of discomfort, Major Nesbit."

"Mrs. Nesbit would be exceedingly hurt, if any apologies are offered or thought of; I have often heard her say, 'the bird that we nurse, is the bird that we love;' and be assured, my son, it will be a great pleasure to have your stay with us prolonged; and if you attempt any apologetic addresses, we shall conclude, to you it is an affliction."

"Major Nesbit, my only dread is being declared sufficiently recovered to leave this cheerful hearth-stone; such as my father, and myself, living so isolated, are apt to brood over past evils, and to anticipate little else in the untold future."

"It would be a singular lot, that would bear retracing," said Dr. Lodi, rising from the couch, taking his hat in one hand, and placing his cane under his arm, "the habit is unfortunate for the most of us, particularly we of half a century. I am just double your age, Lemuel. You are to retrieve the past--the old mourns it." Bending over his nephew, he repeated several passages from the Hebrew. The countenance of the speaker could not be seen, but in the steadfast, earnest gaze of the other, was plainly written, "Few and evil have been the days of the years of my pilgrimage." While shaking hands with the gentlemen, Dr. Lodi said cheerfully, "I will soon see you again, Ulie, in the capacity assigned me to-day," he added, turning again to Major Nesbit, "I have made an appointment six miles beyond this to-morrow, with Mr. Mordecai. I hope to be gratified with an introduction to the ladies of your family."

"The gratification will be reciprocal, Dr. Lodi," returned the Major; "I only deferred doing so this morning, as I supposed you would prefer devoting the visit exclusively to our charge." Exchanging a very pleasant glance with that charge as he spoke he followed the Doctor to his carriage.

"I hope your uncle does not feel at all offended by my retention of the patient, inquired Dr. Rodgers. It only appeared right the whole credit should be mine, which would have been awarded him had the change been made."

"I know Dr. Lodi so thoroughly," was the answer, "that had I made such a proposition, he would have rebuked my injustice, and scorned taking your place."

"He is a very excellent man, Dr. Lodi, very excellent man, indeed; I would like him to call with me on several of my patients, very intricate cases. I am sure he would see I knew my business, if he were eye witness to my management."

"I do not believe, doctor, my uncle will require other proof than my recovery to establish your reputation with him; moreover, the idea will hardly occur to him, that you regard his opinion of your abilities."

"Oh! yes; distinguished men are often or may be a great advantage to others of their profession; but perhaps he never visits with other physicians."

"Rarely, I believe; but I have no authority to decline his doing so; to oblige you, he will no doubt consent."

"I will certainly request it as a very great favor: you had better be quiet now, my young friend; you have had enough excitement for one day." The weary frame gave way to drowsiness, and when Mrs. Nesbit came into the room, soon after the visit of the doctor, he was sleeping soundly; she closed out the light, and, quietly withdrawing, left him to regain a full measure of strength by a siesta of several hours.

"How shall I find language to render my thankfulness to you, my dear Mrs. Nesbit, for your unparalleled attention and kindness to me; as soon as I waked, I saw by the soft mellow light in the room, whose hand had been mindful of my comfort while sleeping."

"The pleasure of alleviating suffering is sufficient reward in itself, my dear, and any expressions of gratitude from you would be oppressive; remember also,

that you are my adopted son," she said, laughing, "it is my duty."

There was a long interval of silence.

"There was one in attendance, Lemuel, drawn only by affection, who never left you until the dawning return of your reason drove her from your side." Mrs. Nesbit lowered her voice as she spoke; she was sitting, her elbow resting on the couch, her cheek upon her hand; "you were unconscious of her presence, Lemuel, yet she was the principal agent in your recovery."

"My sister," he said, sadly—Oh! how sadly.

"Is your sister older than you, my dear?"

"Miriam is my twin sister, Mrs. Nesbit, we were rocked in the same cradle; we were the remnant of a large family of children; the grave demanded until there was no more to crave; we were our father's last link to life,—and that is broken,—she forsook the God of her father." Covering his hand over his face he remained silent.

"We cannot imagine how Miss Mordecai discovered you were here, and ill," observed Mrs. Nesbit, when he seemed more calm.

"Whither I wander, and where I rest, are well known to my sister; neither are her movements unknown to me. Our hearts are knit together as one, Mrs. Nesbit; but whom God scatters as enemies, we dare not gather to our bosom."

"Oh! my son, my son, how grievously are you perverting your own Scriptures," exclaimed Mrs. Nesbit, her eyes witnessing to an overflowing heart; "if you would, if you could only see the truth as it is, you would see yourself opposing the mercy, goodness, and justice contained in your own laws."

"My dear Mrs. Nesbit, you are prejudiced; you have been trained according to the Testament views of the Man of Nazareth; spare me—spare me—Miriam is all you can think, can say of her; I acknowledge her an embodiment of loveliness, but Miriam has forsaken Israel's God, and must be as one who is not;—was—was,"—he hesitated; "was my sister's husband with her?"

"No; we were not aware she was married."

"It is well,—it is better so," he said, settling his head again upon the pillow. "I will take that water, if you please, Mrs. Nesbit, and do not," he said, as he returned the glass, "allow Dr. Lodi to hear of my sister's having been here."

"Dr. Rodgers mentioned it to him yesterday."

"Did he make any comment, Mrs. Nesbit?"

"He merely enquired, 'Is she here, now?' and when answered in the negative, made no remark."

"How painfully am I indebted to her, and how much more bitterly lament the stern necessity to cast her off, but even the lament is grievous before God! You are aware Mrs. Nesbit—" Miss Houston coming in with a small tray, broke the sentence.

"Of what is Mrs. Nesbit aware, that I am not?" she asked cheerfully, observing the very sombre expression of his countenance. "I have come to relieve guard, and intend to be told—so go, get some tea, Mary, and assist Cornelia out of her quandary, she has talked herself into trouble with her father; you are required there, I think."

"Required every where, is she not, Miss Houston? How strangely my father's house will appear to me now, without a lady's guidance; we seemed comfortable, but it is the mere semblance of it; we must have a lady housekeeper forthwith; this tea, this chipped beef is so different from any we ever have."

"Yes, indeed," replied Miss Houston; "man is a forlorn being without a mother, wife, or sister; no housekeeper will supply the place of either; she is paid for her services, and that never imparts the right kind of interest."

"But yours seems to me a very peculiar family, Mrs. Houston; even the little children are unlike others."

"They are carefully instructed, but not so entirely unique; the children of their tutor are perfectly lovely, they are so beautifully trained, they are strictly obedient in the absence of their parents; affectionate and conscientious, they are samples of good govern-

ment; they have been every day at our house with their father. His apology for bringing them, was a particular engagement of Mrs. Ryers, and they keep no domestic. But apology was unnecessary, for they never give any trouble; you, being fond of children, would delight in them; and Bird, has quite interested little Lemuel in her sick friend, and has promised to bring him into your room as soon as you say she may."

"Houston, and the Bird, have been away more than a fortnight; on my account, I would advise closed doors, next snow storm."

"And shut out an angel, mayhap," returned Miss Houston, laughing, and receiving the tray with which he had finished; "as to our children here or their grandfather's is the same home, and I think you will gradually discover, you have not so very much inconvenienced us. Shall I return, or would you rather be left to an entirely quiet evening, Mr. Mordecai?"

"I love your society, Miss Houston, yet perhaps, this evening it were better debarred me; before you leave me, shall I introduce you to a title of that Mr. Mordecai, more familiar to him, and greatly preferred? Lemuel, Miss Houston."

"I like the name far better myself, and will try to remember to address you by it. I hope you will correct me whenever I transgress; good-night, Mr. Mordecai—Lemuel, I mean."

"May the blessing of Abraham's God abide with you," he ejaculated, returning warmly, the kindly pressure of her hand.

Major Nesbit looked in upon him at bed-time, before the family separated for the night.

"Nellie, why did father insist upon taking cold water, this evening, when he always enjoys a cup of tea so much?" enquired Marion, after they had retired for the night.

"I think, Marion, father is very easily irritated at me, of late; he says little, but constantly looks so rebukingly. I scarcely dare open my lips."

"Father never rebukes, either by word or look, un-

deservedly ; Nellie, you must have expressed yourself very incautiously this evening."

" Well, Marion ; I have often thought you gave yourselves unnecessary trouble, by making 'tea and coffee' at the table, as it could be done just as well in the kitchen ; and having it to do myself this evening, I suppose I expatiated too plainly on the folly and bother, than pleased father, yet he said nothing, and I am sure I had no thought he would refuse to take tea, after I had drawn it. I wish mother could resume the charge of the house, I never could bear the drudgery. I think it decidedly degrading to human nature."

" The refinement of our mother's nature, does not seem to have suffered from the exposure," returned her sister, laughing. " You meet with extreme difficulties in your daily avocations ; old Susan, is quite built up by mother's morning visit to her kitchen. Margaret always goes on so smoothly, with a word or two of approbation, and I am sure Hogan never omits a publication of his wonderful qualifications, upon some commendatory remark of mother's ; and so far from agreeing with you, Nellie, that mother should return to household affairs, I was going to propose to you, that her two daughters should relieve her from them altogether ; we owe much to our parents, Nellie. How diligently, father has employed himself these many years for our and the boys' education, and now, with decreasing strength, still continues writing for hours every day, to give Housie and Bird the same advantages ; we ought to leave nothing omitted, surely, that would promote his happiness and comfort."

" I declare, Marion, you have no enlargement of views ; you care very little for fashionable society ; we therefore see things so differently. Housework of all kind I despise, and will never voluntarily undertake it. As to our obligations to our parents, every child has a right to be supported and educated ; what more has been done for us ? I feel feverishly the great disparity in our circumstances, and those of other girls of our position in life ; for my part, I think the Misses Nes-

bit have a great deal to contend with, and no little mortification to endure, for lack of means to shine in the circle in which they were born."

"We certainly are opposed in sentiment, if these are yours, Nellie; I feel only gratitude to our father, and a strong desire to relieve him and mother from all care. My dear sister, I think you are all wrong, and never will be happy unless you endeavor to be contented with the things that are. Our situation and circumstances in this world have been allotted by an all-wise Creator. Would it not be better to enjoy the present, and try to promote the enjoyment of others, than to be ever looking forward for what may never be realized?"

"Perhaps so, Marion, but I am sleepy," turning her head on her pillow in a manner plainly saying she was tired of the subject. Marion, after commanding them both in a silent prayer to God, sought sleep also; she saw with pain the increasing selfishness of Cornelia, and felt greatly troubled to witness the consequent impatience of her father towards her. She sat on the side of the bed, in the morning, watching the untroubled countenance of her beautiful sister as she slept, and devising many plans to arrest the progress of this moral distemper.

Cornelia awoke; "Why, Marion, are you dressed?" she exclaimed, rising up a moment, and then throwing herself back upon the pillow. "I do wish we could afford a stove in our chamber. Kate Spencer does not know the feeling of dressing in a cold room."

"Kate Spencer and we are very differently circumstanced, Nellie; you had better jump up, and not think of the cold, or just come to the window, and enjoy, as I have done this morning, the icicles glittering in the sunlight, and the exquisite show of drifted snow over the trees. Do rise quickly, dear Nellie," she continued, lowering her voice, "do you forget mother's request that we would be in the nursery for prayer by half after seven o'clock? It is now within ten minutes of it."

"Your grand winter sketch," she replied, taking a hasty glance from the window, "only makes me shiver and shake. I do not see any beauty in icicles from a freezing chamber. I dare say, I might be quite enthusiastic in their praise if that chimney had a glowing fire in it."

"Well, I will excuse your lack of admiration for my frigid landscape," said Marion, laughing, "if you will dress quickly, and be ready to obey mother's tap at the door."

"Of course I shall do as mother desires, Marion, but I cannot but coincide with Rad, that Howard is intruding on father's province, and assuming a wrong position."

"Before whom did Radcliff venture such an opinion, Cornelia?" asked Marion, indignantly.

"He told Howard, in the presence of mother and Aunt Harriet."

"How did Howard receive it?"

"He told him he would be one of the last to infringe on the rights of another; to his mother he referred him for an explanation, which he hoped would be satisfactory and a relief to his mind respecting any undue usurpation. Mother told Rad, after Howard had gone, that it had been her request his brother would commence family worship, which he assented to, only on condition his father had no objection, and then no where but in the nursery."

"Knowing all this, Nellie, how could you for a moment give your voice to the injustice of Radcliff toward Howard?"

"Of course, sis, others will think him presuming, and the servants will reflect on father for allowing his son to take the place he ought to fill himself."

"Which of them? they all revere father; and I believe the circle in the nursery is to be confined to ourselves, and mother, because of some allusion of the sort from Radcliff. There is mother, are you ready?"

"Not quite; do not wait for me." Marion found her

mother, Howard and the two children already in the nursery.

"Where is Cornelia, daughter?"

"She will be here presently, mother."

"Oh! I have chosen such a beautiful hymn; I wonder if you know it, sister? It begins

Oh! I think when I read that sweet story of old,  
When Jesus was here upon earth."

"That would not be exactly appropriate for our exercises, Bird," replied her brother, kissing and seating her on his knee, "but while we wait for sister Nellie, you and I will sing it; shall we?"

"Yes, brother dear, and Housie too; he knows it out of book."

Some time elapsed after all the verses of the child's hymn had been sung. "We will sing our morning hymn, dear, said Mrs. Nesbit; Cornelia will probably hear that and hasten down." As she spoke the door opened, not Cornelia, but Major Nesbit entered. Howard did start and did change color, yet so slightly as to be scarcely perceptible.

"This is your prerogative father; to yield it to you would give me great pleasure," Howard said, not unfalteringly.

"Keep your seat, my son,—select the chapter yourself he replied," gently pushing back the book Howard was offering. I will remain with you during the exercises. Where is Nellie?"

"She has not quite completed her toilet."

"Birdie, go tell your sister papa and you are ready for worship, and she must be also."

"We will go together, Birdie," said Marion, "and bring her between us."

They soon came back, Cornelia with them. Hattie returned to the side of her brother Howard. Houston occupied a chair near the fire, Cornelia placing him on the very edge, took the seat herself; Marion and Howard sat at either side of the table, on which still lay the two books; Major and Mrs. Nesbit were seated on a

lounge on the opposite side. There was perfect silence, a brief space; the eyes of the father and son met, Major Nesbit bowed his head, and Howard took up the hymn-book; he selected and led the singing of

Jesus, and shall it ever be  
That mortal man's ashamed of thee?

Then opening the bible, he read clearly, distinctly, yet with great humility, the last thirty verses of the fifth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

The family then knelt; for a few moments no sound was heard, but this silence was followed by the Lord's Prayer, spoken calmly, fervently, every petition solemnly distinct; then as though the spirit had given him utterance, he ejaculated, "Oh Holy Father, give to every member of our family free access, boldness of access, through the Lord Jesus Christ, to the Throne of the Heavenly Grace, lead by our head, to the great Head of the Church."

The "Amen" of Major Nesbit reverberated on every heart.

Mrs. Nesbit immediately retired, motioning Houston and Hattie to follow, she sent them down stairs to Hogan, then sought her own chamber, to pour out the glad thanksgiving of a hoping, trembling, trusting heart.

Marion paused before her father, as she was leaving the room; he looked up, and returning her warm affectionate kiss, said, "The Lord keep you, my darling daughter," throwing her arms around his neck, she burst into tears. Major Nesbit made no effort to conceal his own emotion, with his arms wrapped around Marion, for a long interval they wept together. "Go, my beloved child," he whispered, "go to your mother, I am sure she needs you at this time; I will join you presently; Marion trying to wipe away her tears, obeyed him. Howard had walked to the window. Cornelia sat spell-bound—she desired to get away from a scene she could not but feel, and feel painfully; but what to say, or what not to say, perplexed her; she

remained only because she did not know what was best to be done.

"Father," said Howard, without noticing if he observed the presence of Cornelia, "I assure you, I felt great diffidence in taking this step, it was at mother's earnest request, yet I am very confident you do not consider it an assumption of your rights; how do you feel towards me, sir?" drawing the low chair Hattie had vacated near him, he threw himself into it, and his arm across his father's knee.

"Pride, my boy," he said emphatically, laying his hand upon the shoulder of Howard, "and were that possible, my affection would increase three-fold." Howard's head sank on the knee of his father; Major Nesbit continued, "you stand, my son, where I ought to have stood twenty-six years ago; to-morrow we will exchange positions; henceforth I will be the priest at the family altar, my son has taught me the way." Again the tears of Major Nesbit flowed freely, and again there was a silence most trying to Cornelia; suddenly clasping his hands upon the head of Howard, he said earnestly, "Heaven's richest blessings descend upon my son, the son of my right hand, my Howard; leave me now to myself, my children," he said in a subdued tone. "Go, Nellie, seek you also the path of righteousness, my daughter." Howard raised his head, he attempted to speak, but was unable—he held his father's hands in a tight clasp a moment, then, turning to his sister, drew her arm in his own, and left the room.

"If this is a specimen of what our morning worship is to be, Howard, I shall plead leave of absence," said Cornelia, scornfully, as they passed down stairs.

"As father intends conducting the exercises himself, Nellie, I shall consider it a privilege to be present, and I rather think he will make it obligatory that we shall all be there, his children and servants."

"Not Rad; why he is never up till after eight."

"If father exert his authority, Rad nor any other Nesbit will dare oppose it."

"I cannot think father will require it of us, if disagreeable," said Cornelia, worriedly.

"In a matter of conscience, father will not be deterred issuing his commands by likes or dislikes; here is mother with Mr. Mordecai's breakfast; I did not think it was so late."

"Mr. Mordecai's! I forgot there was such a person in the world."

"Go, quick, daughter, and take my place at the waiter; your sister has a severe headache, and I shall be engaged a short time."

"Well, I do think," observed Radcliff, pettishly, as they entered, "it is late, later, latest, this morning. What on the face of the earth has kept you all? I am fairly famished; Nell, do you know it is nine o'clock?"

"Yes, since you tell me, but stop scolding, and take your coffee, I find I am hungry too. Father is not well, Marion has a headache, mother is attending on your grandee of the Vulcan, Howard is not inclined to be entertaining, I never am pleased at the troublesome end of the table, you are angry as all the rest—that is the present condition of the Nesbits—now let me eat my roll."

"I merely made an ordinary inquiry, and expected a civil reply, but shall not again interfere with your repast, most assuredly. Howard, do you take Mordecai's sleigh to-day? If so, I will accompany you to Varastone."

"Not to-day, Rad, I have some business letters to look over for Mr. Ryers, and also, an engagement to meet two gentlemen at grandfather's."

The meal was finished in silence; soon after Radcliff started in his own sleigh for Varastone."

"What has happened to detain Mr. Ryers?" exclaimed Howard, looking at his watch, "an hour past his time, and he so prompt and punctual, I never knew him to be behind the minute."

"Well, yes," rejoined Cornelia, "I do give him credit for that; he is as regular as the sun in his business movement. But, Howard," she continued, coming close

beside him, "I cannot account for that singular quirk of father's this morning; why did he not give notice he was going to commence family worship, and not interrupt you so strangely?"

"To me, it was a delightful interruption, Nellie. Mother had spoken to him of her proposition to me, to build the altar, and said he expressed himself quite satisfied, but did not say he meant to be present. Mother was entirely overcome, she says it is the happiest day of her life."

"I am sure I am glad mother is happy, but it will very differently affect me; for father, you say, will oblige us all to be up, and I do so hate to be hurried."

"I hope, I trust, I pray," Howard replied, placing his arm around her, and drawing her close to him, "that the hour is not far distant, when my dear sister Cornelia will feel it a privilege to seek the Lord early."

"You and I see this world so differently, Howard; to me it is all brightness, and I desire its enjoyments."

"Its brightness will not be the least dimmed by securing a permanent home in a far, far brighter world, my sister."

"I am young, Howard, there is time enough to devote to religion; I do not wish to be moody and mopish, as I frequently see Marion and others, who will not sympathise with the pleasures I am seeking, and mean to find," she added, disengaging herself from her brother's embrace.

"And yet, it was but yesterday you asserted that there was always disappointment in the possession, the great enjoyment was in the pursuit of pleasure," he seated himself on the sofa, on which she had thrown herself.

"Perhaps so," was the haughty reply, "but I do not desire to be advised; the course you have chosen pleases you, allow me to select my own; there is sufficient in this world to satisfy my cravings, had I the means of indulging them. Please, Howard, let there be no more such lectures, or I shall dread the sight of you."

"I should really be sorry to be a dreaded object," he said, half smiling, and laying down the hand he had been holding between his own; "but, Cornelia, I shall always find a welcome in one presence, and to that presence I shall carry you on my heart daily, even to the Throne of our Almighty Redeemer."

The eyes of Cornelia dropped suddenly; her brother arose, and stood before her: "Do you dissent from this also, my own sister?" he whispered, bending over her, and laying his hand gently on her head.

A quiver passed over her beautiful features, but she did not raise her eyes; Howard stood a moment silent, then kissing her affectionately, he left her alone.

A short time after, while sitting with Mr. Mordecai, his father handed him a note he had received from Mr. Ryers. "Poor Ryers," Howard remarked, as he folded the paper; "he seems to be a target for all kinds of trouble."

"What is the present annoyance?" enquired Mr. Mordecai, carelessly.

"This note is an apology for his absence to-day, owing to the illness of his youngest child, fearing to introduce disease here, as their physician suggests it may be something infectious; and moreover they have had to send the boy from home until the nature of the disorder is ascertained."

"They are a peculiarly unfortunate family," rejoined Mrs. Nesbit; "the messenger said Lemuel had been sent to the mother of their little domestic, no doubt a very reputable person, but by no means a desirable residence for the child, even for a few days. In your reply, Howard, say, it is my request Lemuel should be sent to me, or to Aunt Harriet, as Mr. Mordecai might be disturbed by the noise of three children."

"Do not consider me, I beg, Mrs. Nesbit; I shall not be in the least annoyed. This is really an asylum for the homeless," he added, with one of his sad smiles.

"Lemuel is a remarkably good boy," said Howard. "I do not believe he knows the meaning of the word disobedience."

"Write immediately, dear, or you will be too late for the post. Go, Howard, or you will be detained—there is the front door bell ringing."

"Mr. Solomon Mordecai," was hardly announced by Hogan, when that gentleman appeared. "Pardon me, my dear sir—pardon me, my dear lady; your servant invited me to the drawing-room, but I followed on to my son. Excuse my haste." Without awaiting a reply, he threw himself into the extended arms of his son, and wept like a child; Major and Mrs. Nesbit withdrew. A length of time only the deep tones of Lemuel were heard repeating Psalms and Hebrew texts; then the father poured forth a thanksgiving for the restoration of his boy; towards the close his voice modulated, his manner was more subdued, and in a little while the old man was entirely composed.

"What do not we owe to this family, that my last blessing remains to me? How tenderly you have been nursed and cared for, my Lemuel, my staff, my beloved; how will it be possible ever to evince my gratitude to Mrs. Nesbit and her family?"

"Our obligations are weighty indeed, father."

"Have you suffered greatly, Ulie."

"Not consciously, father, my brain being disordered, I was under a very sweet delusion during my illness, which doubtless assisted the endurance of what would otherwise have been extreme suffering."

His father smiled—"Always romantic, Ulie; what may have been the nature of the dreams of a fevered brain?"

Lemuel placed one hand under the back of his head; as he laid the other on the side of the bed, his father rested his affectionately upon it, and looked up enquiringly.

He replied—"Throughout my sickness my mother's spirit seemed to hover over me; I felt her gentle hand upon my forehead—I plainly heard her suasive accents in answer to my complainings, and constantly her cheek was laid against mine, as she would warble our incomparable melodies so soothingly. I never missed

her from my bed-side, and slept in perfect security, lulled by the confidence that my mother's ministrations would be continued,—nor did they cease until my reason was restored."

"Then the illusion vanished?"

"Yes, father; and the sad reality made known to me."

"Why sad, my son, if so serviceable to you?"

"Because those services of my mother's daughter can never be acknowledged."

"Did your sister come to you, Lemuel?"

"Else had I died, father; the kind attentions of this family were unremitting, but my sister only was acquainted with my constitution. She only could read my unexpressed desires. She only knew how and when to indulge my fancies, and satisfy my whims."

"What would you, Lemuel? has my heart ever ceased to yearn over my misguided child, my apostate Miriam?"

"Shall I receive health at her hand with unblushing silence? Is this, according to the code of our laws?"

"Is not the 'accursed of God' of our Talmud sufficient response, Lemuel? Would you waver? Let his enemies be scattered; however much our friends they may have been, my beloved boy. Has Dr. Lodi spoken with you on this subject?"

"No; why, father?"

"The Lodi family reject oral teaching, they receive only scripture writ."

"Was our mother among its unbelievers, father?"

"Decidedly; and doubtless removed from earth, previous to the apostacy of her daughter, as she would have withstood the anathemas of the Rabbins, and thereby endangered her own soul."

There was now a terrible conflict in the mind of the younger Mordecai; he essayed to speak, but as his eye met the pale, agonized countenance of his father, he restrained himself, "Promise me, Lemuel," he said, "you will never make any enquiries of your uncle, relative to your mother's sentiments."

Surprise held him mute a brief space, he then asked earnestly, yet very gently, "Was our mother's unbelief confined to the Talmud, father?"

"She died suddenly; I trust an Hebrew; her mind had been somewhat tinctured with error. I do not doubt, Lemuel, she returned wholly to the faith of her father. You remember I was absent with you at the time; I never credited the follies told me of her sympathy with the Gentiles, nor gave ear to their treasured expressions imputed to her when expiring. Your mother was born, and was buried a child of Abraham, Lemuel."

"I never could gain any of the circumstances of my mother's last illness. Miriam was not recalled from school by Rabbi Leyden's orders. I was with you, and all my questions were answered vaguely and unsatisfactorily."

"Rest your mind in peace, my son; the faith of Israel was the abiding faith of your angel mother; fasten your belief on this, and be not shaken by the wild rumors of her credulous attendants."

"It was a misunderstanding then, sir, that uncle Paul was with her constantly?"

"No; he was, and of course knew those singular expressions proceeded from a diseased brain. I have not since had any conversation with him on the subject."

"And why may not I, my father?"

"I would rather avoid an elaborate discourse, Lemuel; has not my son always been satisfied to act as I have desired."

Lemuel felt this to be unreasonable, but did not continue the subject, nor was he willing again, to introduce the name of his sister; vainly hoping, his father might ask some question concerning her pecuniary condition. "Shall I touch my bell, father, and afford you an opportunity of becoming acquainted with this Gentile family? You cannot fail to admire them, independent of my obligations here."

"Hattie," he called, for she appeared at the door,

"will you ask your father and mother if they will oblige me, by coming in to see my father?"

"Suppose you tell me your name, first, little lady," said the old gentleman, stooping over on his chair, and stretching out his hand. Hattie came forward, with a timid expression of anxiety, as she glanced at her more familiar friend on the couch. "This is my father, Bird," he said, quite amused at her manner, "you will soon love him far better than you do me; my father loves good little girls, and I can testify you are a very good little girl indeed;" by this time, the child was close to the bed, and had really ventured on such a recommendation, to present her left hand to Mr. Mordecai, holding firmly to the couch with the other.

"I have not the name quite yet, my child; Lemuel calls you by two."

"Hattie Nesbit, is my real name, Bird is my nickname."

"Which name do you like best, yourself; I prefer to call you by that."

"I always answer to either of them; when father says "Hattie," I know I have been naughty; and all the girls and boys in Grangeville call me Bird Nesbit."

"Well, I think I must say Bird, too; I wonder if I might have a kiss from that rosy cheek—I would like one very much?"

The child timidly drew near him; "Why, I took two—that was hardly fair, when there must be so many wanting kisses."

Hattie burst out laughing; "two are not so many," she said, "Howard always takes twenty, and Mr. Ryers says, I am like somebody's toe—just meant to be kissed."

"Who, darling?" asked Mr. Mordecai.

"Will, Birdie go now, and give my message to her father and mother?" said Lemuel, hurriedly; the old gentleman released her.

"If that is a sample of the house of Nesbit, Ulie, I envy you your sojourn; why, she is lovely, so diffident, yet so sociable—I wonder if I can coax her home with me?"

"I intend to try my best to persuade them both

home with me; she has a brother, as engaging as herself—a frail boy, not long for this world, I fear.” He was interrupted by the entrance of Major, Mrs. Nesbit, Miss Houston, and Howard.

“My suspense and anxiety, must apologise for my abruptness, my dear friends,” said Mr. Mordecai, returning the cordial shake of Major Nesbit’s hand, and courteously receiving the salutes of the others, as they were severally introduced. “Language cannot express my gratitude to you, ladies, for your kindness to my only son.”

“You unduly appreciate our services, Mr. Mordecai,” returned Mrs. Nesbit, with one of her very cheerful smiles; “we hope that much pleasant intercourse between us, and both the Messrs. Mordecai, will be dated from this indisposition; and we are therefore most happy to have been providentially permitted to render your son this service.”

“Now, that he is recovering,” observed Miss Houston, “I would be unwilling this sickness had not occurred; Lemuel has wound himself around our hearts, by his patience, and other qualities, not to be named in his presence.”

“Afraid of my vanity, Miss Harriet?”

“No,” interrupted the Major; “sister is fearful I might lecture her, on the sin of flattery.”

“Truth is not flattery, brother, and I have only a habit of commending the praiseworthy.”

“It would be a dangerous habit in most persons,” observed Howard, “but Aunt Harriet has a way of praising everybody, into just what she chooses they shall be; I attribute the good manners and sweet dispositions of our children, to this management of hers.” Miss Houston laughed.

“I put myself entirely under your jurisdiction, Miss Harriet,” said Lemuel.

“Ah! like Howard, Lemuel, I fear you are past my moulding,” she replied, with mock gravity.

“My uncle—Dr. Lodi,” said Lemuel, directing the attention of Major Nesbit to the door. There stood Dr.

Lodi, with little Hattie by the hand ; she followed him rather hesitatingly. "This young lady," he began, at the same time acknowledging, very politely, Major Nesbit's introduction to the ladies, "This young lady, Mrs. Nesbit, would hardly be persuaded it could be lawful, under any circumstances, for her to enter Mr. Mordecai's room, unless he had asked to see her; do, please, Mr. Mordecai, grant the passport."

"Birdie has free admission, and my full permission, whenever she is disposed to make me a visit. Who said there was any restriction, Hattie?"

To the surprise of Dr. Lodi, with one bound she was seated on the side of the couch, and her lips close to Mr. Mordecai's ear.

"Ha—mamma's rule is it?" he replied to her whisper; "she thinks little children may be troublesome, hey? Well, I do not often feel inclined to dispute any of mamma's regulations, Bird, but I will try to come up with her, by asking for you every day; I did think my sick room was too gloomy, for the dear little girl, and her brother."

"Oh!—no; I love to come in—and Housie, too," she exclaimed, with eagerness; "but mother says, we must not be 'truders—so that is the reason we wait until we are sent for."

"A most excellent arrangement," observed Dr. Lodi, as Lemuel was about to answer, "and would be well if more generally adopted. I love children, but I must say, they are too prominently brought forward at the present day."

"I have learned not a little of family government since I have been here,—the training of Mrs. Nesbit is not confined to the children, I myself have felt its influence."

"I certainly have accomplished a great deal if I have improved you, Lemuel; in what way can you personally testify to my talent? I confess I see no very marked change in you."

"There is some ambiguity in your observations, Mrs. Nesbit," pursued Dr. Lodi, raising his brows at Lemuel;

"was there no place for improvement in Ulie, or was the difficulty in producing it?"

"I do not think I will render a solution, doctor," replied Mrs. Nesbit, laughing; "but I do feel a little curious to know what attainment Lemuel has reached through my influence."

"The knowledge of the potency of moral suasion, my dear Mrs. Nesbit, the only power I shall ever exercise over my realm," he answered, gaily.

"You will discover all dispositions will not yield to it, or your experience and mine will greatly differ," returned Mrs. Nesbit, with a heavy sigh.

"Little Miss Nesbit has fallen asleep," Dr. Lodi observed, changing the tenor of a discourse becoming obviously painful to Mrs. Nesbit; "she is dreaming, nestled up close to 'sick Mr. Mordecai,' who, she said, was a 'great friend of hers.'"

"And shame on him if he ever forfeit the title," said Lemuel, quickly, at the same time drawing down a pillow, that she might sleep the more comfortably.

"Children are alike in every generation," said Dr. Lodi; "they sink to sleep from weariness, without the least consciousness of having fatigued themselves; I found that child very diligently shovelling up the snow into a hillock, that their sleds might slip better, but she gave her spade into the hands of another, very pleasantly, when I told her I needed her guidance. To sleep is their mode of resting, and nature is truly overcome before they yield to it. But do I not hold your promise, major, for an introduction to your other daughters?"

"The understanding was, you were to dine with us to-day, doctor; I shall be very happy to present you to them."

"I am only acquainted with Miss Cornelia, myself," said Lemuel; "and with her only slightly. Birdie, here, captivated me fairly the first evening. I became intimate at once with her and Houston; I suppose his absence is also owing to your interdict, I beg it may be removed."

"As you will, Lemuel, it will delight them both; but you must not permit them to be troublesome."

"Troublesome," he repeated, gently passing his fingers through the curls lying on the pillow near him.

Radcliff soon after joined the party in the library; he was in one of his most agreeable moods, and supported a spirited conversation until the ringing of the dinner-bell. Lemuel requested his little sleeper might remain to dine with him, promising to send her in to the dessert.

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## CHAPTER VI.

"For the wearied spirit lieth  
As a fainting maiden,  
Captive, and borne away on  
The warrior's foam-covered steed."

"MR. MORDECAI dines down stairs to-day, so Bird reports, and in a few days is to take a short ride. I wonder when he will turn his face homewards; his father makes the quere every day, but mother finds some good excuse for his detention. I really think our house may be called 'Jews quarters.'"

"What objection to our guests, Cornelia?"

"Not so much now, father, that the young man has been removed up stairs, but I missed the library exceedingly."

"And he was as greatly disturbed at occupying as though he knew it; you speak, daughter, as if it were possible for him to return to Rocklyn, he is not able to ride one mile; the Doctor directs a trial in the sleigh to-morrow; you will drive, Howard?"

"I made that arrangement with him, sir, after repeated assurances the pleasure outweighed the trouble; I almost wonder, father, that one so accommodating and ready to oblige as he is, should so shrink from an obligation."

"Howard might recognize himself in such a character, but it is not at all unusual, my son, the most obliging dispositions expect the least from others."

"I have seen very little of Mr. Lemuel Mordecai," said Marion. I admire his father and Dr. Lodi, exceedingly."

"Yes, Dr. Lodi is agreeable; but I thought the old nabob, need not have exhibited so much pride towards Ulie Ryers, the first day he dined with him here."

"Why should he select him particularly, Nellie, daughter; he supposes himself and son peculiarly obliged to us, consequently assumes no inequality of rank. Under other circumstances he would consider and treat your father and all his family as plebians. Was he aware Lemuel Ryers was not one of us?"

"I observed," said Radcliff, "something in the child disconcerted him; he asked his name, and I judged he had heard Ryers was tutor here, and concluded it unnecessary to add him to his list of acquaintance."

"Your imaginings," replied Major Nesbit, "would lessen old Mr. Mordecai very much in my opinion, were I not certain you were mistaken. Marion you did not observe any of this absurdity in the old gentleman?"

"I noticed, with Radcliff, that Dr. Lodi removed Ulie from the seat next Mr. Mordecai, and placed him between him and Howard, father; but, I cannot think his conduct attributable to pride; I suspected his fondness for children, did not extend to little boys, and was rather amused by the doctor's tact, besides I saw Mr. Mordecai, caressing the child afterwards."

"Sister, I saw that too," interrupted Cornelia, "he was told the sleigh was ready, and was starting, when little Ulie ran up to him with his cane, and said in his polite way, 'Shall I carry your stick, sir?' 'No, my dear,' he answered, 'I will take it;' then as Ulie handed it to him, he looked up so sweetly and said, 'Good-bye, sir,' it was then he kissed him and patted him on the head; but the next minute he seemed to repent of his condescension, for he covered his face with his

hand and sat abstracted until called by Dr. Lodi to take his seat in the sleigh."

"Does the son evince the same pride towards the innocent child?" asked Major Nesbit.

"The children all play in his room and Ulie talks as fast of 'Mr. Mordecai' as the others, but I have had no opportunity of witnessing his behaviour towards him, father."

"Make it a rule henceforth, daughter, to see no evil until very confident of its existence. Mr. Solomon Mordecai and his son Lemuel, be assured, are quite beyond such littleness; the boy himself would have observed any slight—Lemuel Ryers is a very shrewd and a very sensitive child."

"There was something quite singular in old Mr. Mordecai's first meeting with Lemuel Ryers, Marion," observed Howard when the rest had left the room; and have you not noticed how carefully Mordecai manages to keep the two boys out of his father's sight during his daily visit to him?"

"Certainly I have, yet never could have misconstrued it unto pride. I think I have the correct interpretation, and therefore his son takes care he is not disturbed by them during his stay."

"Very probably it is nothing more," replied Howard, with a merry laugh; "how much mystery and evil may grow out of a trifle! Marion, how regularly Rad comes to family worship, and shows no disrelish; has he named the subject to you?"

"Never,—I was present when father told him, the evening of the day we commenced, that he expected to see him in the parlor every morning at half past seven for prayers; he bowed his head without making any remark, and excepting the two days he remained at Varastone, has not missed. Why, Howard, we all know father's word is law, if he choose to be decided."

"More the pity he does not oftener exercise his power, Marion. Radcliff requires a firmer rein than father is drawing; he loves authority himself, and the pleasure of being exalted, will, I fear, lead him into

society his natural haughtiness would spurn. Rad likes to be thought very rich, and to be honored in consequence; he never will be, he is too extravagant."

"I am surprised he so often frequents the hotel of the Vulcan; surely, he can have no affinity with the host, or his boarders."

"He gains the applause he courts, by the quantity of small change he scatters there. It is astonishing that he can be flattered by them, but it is even so."

"How entirely different you are, Howard; no one would suppose you brothers!"

"Not more so than my two sisters," returned Howard, smilingly, "yet it is not unaccountable Mari; Rad disliked books and was placed in a city store, while I was kept at school and thereby out of temptation; you were educated at home, Nellie at a fashionable boarding school."

"Yes,—and I have often vainly wished aunt Cornelia Nesbit had left that sum for any other purpose; Nellie would have been far, far better with mother than four years than with Madam Loupe."

"Nellie cannot be excelled in dancing and music; I do not know that she has reaped any other advantage under that lady's tuition. She has views that never can be realized in our situation, Marion, and I believe your influence over her is about equal to mine over Rad."

"Yes, they both think that as we have been most of our lives enclosed in a village, and instructed in a village school, we have had no opportunity, and, of course, no capacity to judge of the world and its society."

"I have heard mother lament the course that was pursued, suggested by aunt Cornelia's will, Marion. I suppose she was selected because of her name."

"Father made great efforts to send me with her. I cannot be too thankful he did not succeed, though I confess, my anxiety to go at the time was very great."

"Your remaining at home has been my great gain,

Marion; what would have become of me, with two boarding-school sisters?"

"As Mr. Mordecai said to mother when talking over his sorrows; 'how many clouds there are with golden borders, Mrs. Nesbit, I cherish hope, as I watch them floating away with their bright crest.' I never have seen a dark cloud since, Howard, but I look for a golden border."

"True, dear Marion, life is just as chequered as the firmament, and well it is, to watch for the bright spots. I always find sunshine in my sister Marion," he added, fondly patting one cheek as he kissed the other,

There was a glad smile on the face of Marion, though her eyes filled with tears as she replied, "My cloud, would indeed be disrobed of its brilliant border separated from you, Howard. I have great occasion for thankfulness for such a brother."

"The cup of thanksgiving seems mingled with tears," he said, playfully; "rainbow clouds, as well as gilt-edged, Mari." Pausing a moment, he said more seriously, "You and I, my companion, sister, will watch life's clouds together; poor Mordecai, has yet to learn there is a covert from all storms, a haven from all life's tempests. We know, the Sun of Righteousness may arise and dispel them all, be they never so dark; to Him, we will look dearest, and fear no clouds, even though they be without the golden border."

"I should be ungrateful, indeed, Howard, did I not feel and acknowledge the pleasantness of my lot in this world; it is only a shadow, flitting over my mind, when I think of life without you."

"Why anticipate an hour which may be far distant? and cannot He, who fills all space, heal a breach His own hand has made? But, we will not dwell any longer on gloomy subjects. You have been too much confined of late; I will get the sleigh, and we will go together and admire the beautiful site that has been chosen for the new Baptist Church, about four miles west from here. We will wrap up the three children, and take them along."

"Three people have worn these stockings," little Lemuel Ryers was saying, as Howard opened the door; he was standing with one foot on Mr. Mordecai's arm chair, fastening his shoe.

"How came three people to wear the same stockings?" asked Howard, advancing toward them.

"Because, they grew too little for my mother's brother, and then for her, before they were at all worn. They had mamma's brother's name on them; so she just marked R. after the letters, and now they do for me, nicely. See," he continued, rolling up his pants, "L. M. R., mamma found them at the bottom of an old trunk, and she said she would rather have them than six new pairs."

"From Mr. Mordecai's wearied look, I shall have other thanks than yours, Ulie," replied Howard, placing the child on his shoulder, "he should turn you all out, when you tire him. You must not allow them to fatigue you, Mordecai; I shall report to mother."

"I am not fatigued, Nesbit; his prattle sends my thoughts back into my own childhood; I rather like to listen to the relation of his experiences."

"I suppose we might read ourselves in the pages of any childhood," remarked Howard.

"His and mine were very dissimilar; it was the strong contrast interested me," replied Mr. Mordecai; "and I believe each as varied as after life. Neither do I hold childhood to be always the happiest period of our existence; mine was, his is not." His eye turned very sadly on little Lemuel.

"True, under his circumstances, so sensitive a nature is a misfortune; he is totally unfit to brave the storms he will too probably meet."

"He meets with friends to shield him from a present calamity," returned Mr. Mordecai; "in this, the child and I have certainly community of feeling; and I do hope neither will prove ungrateful recipients."

"It would require powerful reasoning to convince Ulie," said Howard, laughing, "that he is not conferring the favor in his willingness to remain; and we all feel

fully compensated in the pleasure of your good society, Mordecai, without further acknowledgment; please let the past suffice."

"I may feel as I will, if I may not express myself, Nesbit, and I do feel most warmly attached to this family, and shall always carry a heart full of thankfulness towards them, notwithstanding your prohibition."

"Well, well," returned Howard, pleasantly, opening the door in answer to a gentle tap, "I suppose I claim too much from my fellow man; for I hold we are only obeying Scripture dictates in aiding the unfortunate; and it would hardly require revelation to urge us, when it would be a decided self-sacrifice to withhold."

"I am silenced effectually, Nesbit, but not a whit changed in my opinion," he replied, extending his hand to Hattie.

Hattie sprang forward, her face beaming with happiness, nearly equipped for sleighing; "Brother," she began, "I am almost ready, but mother sent me here to send Ulie Ryers to ask Mr. Mordecai up stairs; he is in the parlor."

"Mother was not aware I was with you," said Howard, placing the little boy on a chair; and it will be no more than civil to go myself for your father. I will leave Ulie until I return."

"Not at all; take him, and send my father to me; do not take the trouble to return," replied Mr. Mordecai, nervously, "do not leave him."

"The detention will be very trifling," Howard called back.

"And you have a little sister, Birdie tells me, Master Ryers?" said Mr. Mordecai, patting the little hand which Lemuel had laid upon his knee.

"Yes, sir, I have; papa wrote a note to-day to tell Mrs. Nesbit Etta has only the whooping-cough, so he is coming here to teach again, but I must stay here for fear I shall get it too."

"And would you not rather remain here, and play with Houston and Hattie?"

"I love to play with them very much," he replied,

"but I love to live with my mother better; she often tells papa I am a great comfort to her, and keep her from feeling sadly."

"You must mean she is a comfort to you; how can such a little fellow keep away sadness?"

The child suddenly turned his bright expressive face upon his questioner—"I promise my mother I will never leave her, and when I grow a big man, I will help my father work for her, and then she will never cry any more; mamma cries often,—very often, and Etta kisses her over and over, and says 'dear mamma, Etta is good,' and then she hugs little sister up, and does not cry any more. Why Etta comforts mamma, and she is a great deal littler than I am."

"I am truly glad," replied his auditor, "that your mother has such blessings; I trust they may be never failing, Ulie;" he had wrapped his arm around the child, and was fondly caressing him, when Howard entered with old Mr. Mordecai.

"Come, Ulie," said Howard; "we leave our friend in so good company, he can afford to spare us."

"Good-bye, dear Mr. Mordecai," he exclaimed, throwing his arms around his neck. The young man hastily returned the kiss, the old gentleman barely touched the tip of the fingers of the proffered little hand, and coldly said, "Good-bye, sir." Directly the merry voices of the children were bidding loud "adieu" from the sleigh.

The visit of Mr. Mordecai to his son was unusually short, and he withheld every entreaty to remain to dinner, although Lemuel was to make one at the table. "It will not do, my son," he was heard to say as he left the chamber, "it will not do; if such feelings are nurtured, no subsequent effort will eradicate them; smother them, Lemuel, never give way. I will never listen,—never; you are all wrong. I will see you to-morrow, but must not see you thus inclined, nor hear one word again on the subject."

The sleighing party returned, the children in high spirits, and Marion much benefitted by the ride, and

so in love with the location of the church, she declared she felt almost inclined to change her sect.

"And why not, Miss Nesbit?" asked Mr. Mordecai, from the opposite side of the table; "are not all denominations equally sincere, and does not the worship of all tend to the same source?"

"Certainly," she replied; "we differ only in the mode of worship,—our belief in the essential doctrines are alike."

"I have never witnessed Christian worship—but the variety of names among the churches of the Gentiles, has always seemed strangely singular to the uninitiated Hebrew."

"Regularly drilled armies, fighting under the same banner, in different uniform, Mr. Mordecai," said Howard; "those who enlist, select that church, whose form of worship commends itself to their judgment, and taste. Some remain in the church of their ancestry, from generation to generation—we are the fourth in our own—not because we really have any decided preference to it, but our forefathers had, and we have become identified with our church, which is the case with hundreds of families. Marion, here, is ready to dissolve her connection, attracted by mere beauty of prospect."

"I was looking beyond time, Howard, when I made the hasty declaration," returned his sister; "I could not help contrasting that hill-side, studded with choice shade trees—the home of every variety of singing-bird, with our own burying-place,—a gloomy vault, in a crowded city."

"I should regard the city vault the most comfortable, at this season, Miss Nesbit," said Mr. Mordecai, playfully.

"And I also," rejoined Radcliff; "it required the imaginative brain of Marion, to conceive so desirable a residence, under two feet of snow."

"No, brother; the grass is already peeping out to enquire for Spring, and the 'time of the singing of the birds,' and the very many evergreen trees, divest the

place of all appearance of dreariness. I still maintain, that a country graveyard, surrounding a little church, is the preferable resting place."

"I have the same preference, daughter," said Major Nesbit, "provided the worshippers in that church are of my own denomination; not that I glory in an ancestral birthright, or subscribe either to the mere guidance of taste, in the choice of a church; no, notwithstanding Howard's declaration, I hold no religious body, unless its creed, doctrines, and as nearly as possible, its method of conducting worship, be supported by scripture evidence; and not until, by prayerful investigation of the revealed word, did I feel secure in adopting the tenets of the church of my father, and of his father, when fully convinced of its orthodoxy, and catholic spirit, I entered into its fellowship; and I trust no child of mine will build his faith on my belief, but thoroughly and prayerfully examine for himself, and reject every sentiment not in accordance with revelation."

There was silence, a short space; Howard was the first to speak. "Father," he said, "I should be sorry to base my faith on hereditary claim, but would there be great danger of error in following the footsteps of either grandfather Nesbit or Houston?"

"Both truly good men, my son, but, 'Be satisfied in your own mind,' is the injunction. Many as holy men, have had mistaken followers. 'To the law, and to the testimony.'"

"You are quoting my scriptures," observed Mr. Mordecai, pleasantly.

"I know it, my son, and strenuously advise you, with my own children, ever to adhere to that law, and to that testimony, and very soon, we shall all be of one faith, and of one spirit; the careful searching of the scriptures, will not fail to lead us unto all truth."

"And all this discourse," exclaimed Cornelia, as she divided the partitions of a second orange, "arose from Mari's wish to be buried over in the new Baptist yard. I am sure, I would not care a groat, where I went to church, provided I heard a short sermon; see, papa,"

she added, bursting into a loud laugh, "yours has been an anodyne to Housie."

"The ride has been too long for him," said Howard, gravely; he lifted him from his chair, and laying him on a sofa, gently stroked the pale cheek of his little brother, and returned to the table.

"Did he appear fatigued, Howard, when sleighing?" asked Mrs. Nesbit.

"No, mother, quite the contrary; he was in high spirits, descanting with delight on the idea of studying again with their 'dear' Mr. Ryers, and Ulie, here, will be very glad, he says, to see his father to-morrow."

"I would love to see mamma, too, but Etta is so sick she cannot come," said the child.

"Ulie cried for joy when he heard his father was coming," said Hattie; "he made so much noise, Hogan was afraid he would disturb Mr. Mordecai, and then he cried because he thought he had not minded his father, for he made him promise never to speak a loud word near the 'sick gentleman's' room, and he told Ulie to keep away from him altogether, for persons who were ill did not like to be troubled with children."

"Bird, I did not go into Mr. Mordecai's room till your mother said you might take me, and father said I was just to do everything Mrs. Nesbit told me."

"Bird is welcome to bring you, and you are welcome to my room whenever Mrs. Nesbit gives you liberty," said Mr. Mordecai, as he laid his hand on the head of the earnest little speaker; "you are so quiet, you have never disturbed me, and Bird is my 'dear friend.'"

"I would like to be your 'dear friend' too,—may I, Mr. Mordecai?"

"Certainly, and Housie too; I shall be rich in friends, and suppose you take this orange, I think you will enjoy it more than I should."

"No, I will give it to papa for Etta; shall Bird and I bring papa to your room to see you?"

"I would rather not at present, Ulie," replied Mr. Mordecai, coloring deeply.

"By-the-bye," said Cornelia, twisting her napkin

carelessly into a ring, and rising with the others from the table, "I have not seen any of the fancy work of Mrs. Ryers lately,—never since the two baskets presented to mother and aunt Hattie."

"I wonder at it," rejoined Radcliff, "when they found such ready sale, and promissary word for all future articles; they were certainly very pretty, Mordecai, but I could not but wonder at your readiness to invest your eagles in them."

"That subject was discussed at the time, and your objections met, Nesbit, though of very little moment, as my sincerity has not been tested by the artist," was the haughty reply.

"I really feel condemned for my neglect," said Mrs. Nesbit, "but your sudden indisposition and then serious illness has so completely absorbed me, I never thought of urging Mr. Ryers to bring others. I confess I was deterred by the query what may be Mr. Mordecai's disposition of them?"

"I can decorate my father's house with them," he answered with a vain attempt to speak cheerfully.

"I will see Mr. Ryers to-morrow," said Mrs. Nesbit, "and enquire whether the illness of the little girl will admit of other employment."

"Mrs. Nesbit, you will withhold my name; I would not have that known on any account."

"He knows who bought the baskets—I told him myself," interrupted Hattie; "but he will never tell anybody,—he promised me he would not."

A very dark shadow passed over the face of the young Israelite, but instantly recovering himself, he said, "Delicacy will prevent her sending any others; Howard, shall I ask your aid? I will go up to my room."

## CHAPTER VII.

“Purity of motive and nobility of mind,  
Shall rarely condescend  
To prove its rights, and prate its wrongs,  
Or evidence its worth to others.”

“THERE is Mr. Mordecai,” said Hattie, tripping down the lawn as the sleigh drew near the gate; “I am going to let them in.” A bright smile from the invalid repaid her trouble, as he slowly alighted, and entered the house, leaning upon the arm of Major Nesbit, followed by old Mr. Mordecai.

“You look fatigued, Lemuel,” said Mrs. Nesbit; “the exertion has been almost too much in your feeble state.”

“I was scarcely conscious of my weakness until I put forth effort,” he replied. “Where are the young ladies, Mrs. Nesbit?”

“They have returned home with their grandfather; he came purposely to see you this afternoon.”

“How much I regret having been absent; a visit from Mr. Houston is truly refreshing. Upon the hour which he has spent with me daily, for the last month, I look back as a sunny spot in my existence.”

“He came this afternoon particularly, to invite you to make him a visit of a few days before your return home.”

“I scarcely think Lemuel’s strength will permit him to ride twelve miles to-morrow, as he intended,” said his father; “he may therefore be gratified in making this visit, as I must forego the pleasure of his society; and I confess I scarcely wish, in the present low state of his system, to remove him from those to whom he is so much attached.”

“Had I been aware, we could have retained him a

little longer, I could hardly have been unselfish enough to mention father's proposition, but I may as well now deliver the conclusion of the message: 'Tell Lemuel I shall anxiously await him on the morrow, and say to Mr. Mordecai, that I should be happy to have him dine with us on the following day.'"

"As it has your sanction, father, I will be most happy to avail myself of this kind invitation. Mrs. Nesbit, may not Houston and Birdie omit their lessons for a few days and accompany me?"

Mrs. Nesbit shook her head. "In a short time they will lose the benefit of Mr. Ryers' instruction," she replied; "in about a month he resigns his charge."

"Ah! What does he intend doing?"

"He has not yet decided. The chemical chair in a new college at Varastone has been offered to him, but he thinks of returning to Europe, never to revisit this country."

Lemuel started; and Mrs. Nesbit observed his eye the next moment fixed upon his father, as though he would read his thoughts. The lowering brow of Mr. Mordecai attested much displeasure at this silent appeal, and rising, he walked toward the window; but an unbidden tear, hastily brushed away, showed some chord had been touched, exciting kindlier emotion than he would be willing to evince publicly.

Mrs. Nesbit marvelled. How could the movements of Mr. Ryers affect either Mr. Mordecai or his son; they had not even a personal acquaintance, and never had expressed the slightest interest in him. It could have had no connection with the remark; yet there was nothing else to excite this feeling. Her curiosity was completely aroused, but there was no ground on which to rest, to unravel the mystery.

Mr. Mordecai left them soon after, promising to meet his son at Mr. Houston's. As he parted with him, he, in a low tone, remarked, with emphasis, our Scriptures say, "Let all thine enemies be scattered;" we cannot oppose the will of our God, the God of Israel, the Great I AM. Lemuel made no reply, but pleading fatigue, im-

mediately on the departure of his father, retired, and did not again join the family circle until the following morning. At one o'clock, the sleigh was ordered to pay the promised visit to Mr. Houston. Major and Mrs. Nesbit accompanied Mr. Mordecai. The day, although piercingly cold, was bright and invigorating, and the cordial welcome of Mr. and Mrs. Houston, as they received him at the hall door, gave him the same home-feeling he had experienced for the last two months under the roof of Major Nesbit. Major and Mrs. Nesbit did not alight, having some business to transact in Varastone, but promised to return to dinner by three o'clock.

The house bore as cheerful an aspect as its owners; the door, which was at the side, opened into a square hall, thoroughly warmed by a large coal stove. The fine hickory fire, blazing and crackling in the parlor; the bright, brass and irons and fender, the dark chintz curtains, lined with yellow, excluding every breath of air from the four windows, and a divan drawn near the fire, with several cushions, covered with the same material, gave an air of comfort that Lemuel had seldom witnessed.

"This is comfort," he exclaimed, as he seated himself on a chair placed near the fire by Miss Houston; "that is a word I have fully comprehended of late, through your kind attentions, Miss Houston."

"If such deeds were meritorious, Lemuel," she replied, laughing, works of supererogation would be very pleasant to perform."

"Do you not think, good deeds will be estimated by our Creator, Miss Harriet."

"In one sense, certainly; our faith will be shown by our works."

As Miss Houston spoke, she looked earnestly at Mr. Mordecai, his expressive eye sank; the conversation was immediately changed by Mr. Houston, into a channel of a less embarrassing nature. For a time, Mr. Mordecai bore his part in it with some spirit, but his countenance wore a dejected air, which he, in vain,

endeavored to conceal ; at length, acceding to the proposal, that he would rest upon the divan, he lay for nearly an hour without speaking, until arrested by the name of Hattie ; he asked some questions, relative to their teacher, Mr. Ryers, and his contemplated return to Europe. "I was speaking to him on that subject a few days since," replied Mr. Houston. "He tells me, that were he to pursue his own inclination, he would at once sail for his native shores, but his wife feels far differently. Her home associations are here ; and, although fraught with the most painful recollections, she feels, that in foreign lands, the last link to all she still holds dear, will be utterly severed ; he is therefore entirely at a loss how to proceed. The salary at the College is exceedingly small, and he would be obliged to board in Varastone." The compressed lip of Mr. Mordecai did not escape the notice of Miss Houston, but the entrance of Major and Mrs. Nesbit, interrupted further remark. The day passed pleasantly. Howard, Radcliff, Cornelia and Mr. Lennox, came over to pass the evening.

"Where is Marion ?" enquired her grandfather.

"She preferred teaching to visiting this evening," replied Radcliff, sneeringly. "I combatted the point with her, but she feared leaving some point of duty unfulfilled, and was deaf to all my arguments."

"What were they ?" enquired his father, coldly.

"Tenable ones, I assure you, father ; the first was this, that pleasure, being rather difficult of attainment, ought never to be cast idly by, even should duty be slightly involved."

"Then, according to your maxim, Radcliff," said Mr. Mordecai, "pleasure always should anticipate duty ?"

"In minor matters it would save a world of trouble," he replied.

"How ?"

"In the first place, the world would wear a brighter dress. Look at the life of Marion, for instance, a dull monotonous round of duties ; hour after hour spent in visiting the sick and poor of the village, or in search

of Sunday School pupils, &c. Sometimes you see her drumming lessons into the heads of the children, or telling them little stories, until I fly away in a perfect fit of ennui. Her life is not worth living."

"Yet you would find few brighter spirits than Marion's," remarked Howard; "you and she, Radcliff, are both aiming at the same point—pleasure."

"The same point! They are as separate as the antipodes."

"No! the only difference is this: Marion seeks to please others, you, to please yourself. The aim of Marion is accomplished, yours is left ungratified."

Radcliff colored.

"I am not hasty in forming this conclusion, Radcliff; not a day passes but you complain of time weighing heavily upon you, of ennui which cannot be shaken off; while the only regret of Marion is that the day is scarcely long enough for her purposes, and it has always been my experience, that where duty is infringed it leaves a sting."

"Well! well!" returned Radcliff, "time will prove. I am resolved to seek the path of pleasure, to enjoy it to the full; I fear not disappointment. If I am mistaken, if my bright hopes be blasted, there will be time enough hereafter to consider duty."

Howard sighed. "Mark my words, Radcliff, disappointment will come surely, if not at once. You have a sandy foundation on which to build. Selfishness is a broken reed on which to rest your hope."

"You use harsh terms, Howard," replied his brother, "and your view of the future equally baseless, as unsought."

"The prophet craves forgiveness for any unpleasant diving into futurity," replied Howard, pleasantly, "and we will now endeavor to mingle duty and pleasure in this evening's entertainment."

"I must plead an engagement," said Radcliff, rising; "I promised to meet Philip Lewis, to make some arrangements for the archery to-morrow."

The evening passed pleasantly, although the manner

of Mr. Mordecai was often abstracted. At nine o'clock he asked permission to retire, and was lighted to his chamber by Howard. A lamp was already placed there, behind a large green shade upon a small table, and some light refreshment laid upon it for the night. The white dimity window and bed curtains were closely drawn, and the bright little stove newly filled with wood, shed a pleasant warmth through the room. "The kind care of Miss Houston is visible here," remarked Mr. Mordecai, placing himself most comfortably, in a large easy chair, covered also with pure dimity, after removing his coat, and wrapping himself in his morning gown, which was thrown over a chair near the fire. "She always anticipates the wish, ere it is framed."

Howard's face lighted with pleasure. "It seems almost impossible, Nesbit," he continued, "that I have never before visited this room. I feel perfectly at home; my regret is that I can only be a sojourner here. How delightfully comfortable it is. It requires the sympathy of a female friend to make life even tolerable. Your path appears to me thornless, Howard."

"I have many rich blessings truly, Mordecai, but perfect happiness is not the portion of any fallen being. The world, viewing outward circumstances, would pronounce you the far happier of the two. What comparison would this cottage bear to your princely mansion? Your halls, supported by massive pillars, your exquisite statuary, your garden, with every choice exotic, your conservatory, your aviary."

"That garden," he replied, in a tone of sadness, "for years I have never entered the remembrance of my sister there is overwhelming. She directed the arrangement of every plant. In my happiest days, when scarcely a shadow crossed my path, that house always bore a sombre aspect, but when life itself had become darkened with shadows, the oaken frames, walnut furniture, dark grave-colored curtains, and bronze statuary, rendered it almost insupportable. I would gladly exchange it for any other residence, however

humble. It seems also to foster my father's melancholy—not a smile ever lights his features when within its walls. Master of such a cheerful house as this, with a wife or sister of a kindred spirit, is my beau ideal of all that can render life desirable."

"The Hebrew ladies, of the better class, have always been esteemed highly intellectual."

Mr. Mordecai shook his head. "Intellect is not the only qualification to brighten the hearthstone and sympathize with the finer feelings of humanity. Among my race I have never seen a lady I would wish to call my own, and have never looked with interest upon any whom I dare even hope"—he hesitated, the sentence was left unfinished.

"For a little while I must leave you, Lemuel; it is almost ten, and grandfather will wish to have worship before we separate. I will remain here for a few days. The room over the kitchen, immediately adjoining yours, I will occupy; there is a door between, should you require me; but it is time you were now resting."

"Howard," enquired Mr. Mordecai, as he was about leaving the room, "I believe Miss Marion visits her grandfather daily. Does she not?"

"Yes—no—I really cannot tell. That is one peculiarity of Marion's; in the multiplicity of her business, she neglects nothing or no one, and as her grandfather's comfort is one of her chief cares, she must visit him frequently."

"To-day she has omitted it."

"No—early this morning, she came down with Radcliff and returned on foot."

"How does she get time to store her mind so fully?"

"She rises very early, and permits nothing to interfere with her studies for three hours."

"Nesbit, I have closely studied your sister's character, and have never yet detected a flaw."

"With me, Mordecai, she is all that is excellent; but I forget I am speaking of my sister. Perhaps, too, I am somewhat blinded by affection. Good night, Lemuel; happy dreams and refreshing sleep." Soon after he

closed the door. Before Mr. Mordecai had yet retired to rest, the song of praise was heard issuing from the parlor. It ceased, and the voice of prayer followed. He arose, opened the door, and stood a few moments in the entrance. He distinctly heard the words of Mr. Houston, "Shall they indeed, not look upon Him whom they have pierced, and mourn?" He returned to his chamber, without waiting the conclusion, and closed the door, fearing to listen further; but the words he could not erase from his memory for some time. "Who should look?" he asked himself. The Jews, certainly. It was from their own inspired Word. On whom? Him, whom they had pierced. The whole scene on Calvary, read by Mrs. Nesbit, came before him; he endeavored to banish thought, but it was vividly impressed upon his memory. "It is all a delusion," he said, starting up, alarmed at his admission for a moment, "a false, vile imposition, yet arrayed in such a garb that, in my weak state, it appears plausible." He determined never again to listen to the teaching of the New Testament, and offered a prayer to the God of Israel, that the true, and only the true Messiah, might be shown him. He then sought his pillow, but not to rest; Miriam stood before him in all her loveliness. She had renounced home, and friends, for the sake of Jesus, the thought again rushed upon him that the ocean might intervene, and separate them forever. "It cannot, cannot be," he exclaimed, springing up, forgetful of his weakness, and pacing the floor hurriedly, "Miriam, Miriam, my adored one, how can I resign you forever?" A sudden thought seemed to arrest him, and taking some paper from his portfolio, he sat down, and wrote with his pencil the following:

*"Rideville Cottage."*

"MY ADORED, MY ONLY SISTER:

"The light of our dwelling is indeed extinguished, and my spirit crushed by the separation from one who was all of life worth living. I have, indeed, drank misery to the dregs, but the thought of the ocean separating us, fills me with anguish insupportable. It would

be an alleviation of my sorrow, if you would receive the enclosed from me. I ask not Mr. Ryer to accept it; I know he would not, his character I admire greatly; would that my religion would permit me to hail him as a brother. Your children I love as my own soul. Let the cheque be appropriated for them, if in no other way accepted. If you feel hesitation, supposing it to be our father's, I would say that, for the last four years, he has given me five hundred dollars for private expenses. Since I lost my all, expenses or pleasures I have none. I have, therefore, laid it by, purposely for you; make what use of it you think proper. My heart is broken.

“Yours in love,

“LEMUEL MORDECAI.”

The note was folded, and laid carefully in his portfolio; again he sought his pillow, and entirely overcome by fatigue and weakness, he slept soundly until the morning light peeped through his partly closed shutters, and he arose greatly refreshed and strengthened. His first care was his letter, which was safely placed in his vest pocket, until there should be some opportunity for its delivery.

The afternoon brought Dr. Lodi, Mr. Mordecai, Major and Mrs. Nesbit, Howard and Marion to dinner. The evening passed so delightfully, that old Mr. Mordecai was startled when the village bell sounded the hour of nine. “Twelve miles to ride by moonlight; were you aware how time was eluding us, Paul?”

“Only by my time piece, Solomon,” replied Dr. Lodi, rising. “Mr. Houston, as one of the medical faculty, you must allow me to prescribe a frequent visit here, for my brother and myself, the best medicine for the physical man, is to have the mind employed agreeably.”

“I am most happy, Dr. Lodi, to be called in consultation on this subject, and hope the prescription will be followed to the letter.”

“And I,” replied Mr. Mordecai, shaking the hand of Mr. Houston, “cordially, coincide with my doctors in

their decision, and will follow the receipt most cheerfully. Lemuel and I will ever remember both families most gratefully, and have in prospect much pleasant intercourse. On Friday, I hope my son will be able to return to his home."

"On that motion, I must be permitted to place my veto," replied Mrs. Nesbit; "I only loaned him to my father, with the express proviso that he should be returned to the house of Nesbit, for a few days, ere he permanently left us. Dr. Lodi, we require another prescription at your hands."

"Mrs. Nesbit, as a physician, I must always yield the palm to you; Lemuel remains certainly."

The eye of Mr. Mordecai, lighted with gratification. "To a father's heart, your high estimate of my boy is very grateful. We will defer his return home until the following Wednesday; I doubt not Lemuel's approval of this change."

Lemuel, who was at the further end of the room engaged in conversation with the ladies, now came forward.

"Such an arrangement will be entirely in accordance with my wishes, father," he replied; "particularly, as my place is more than supplied by uncle's sojourn with you."

"I shall remain with your father, Lemuel, until your return; in regard to the appreciation of the substitute, I will not too curiously enquire."

The two gentlemen took their leave, and before worship. Mr. Mordecai, excusing himself, retired to his chamber. But from his own reflections, he could not withdraw; Miriam was his first and saddest thought, but the narrative of the New Testament, had made an impression that no effort could erase from his memory. The prophecies he had carefully studied, but no light, excepting through its teachings, had ever been thrown upon them. The thought often intruded itself, and was as often dismissed with horror, that the Man of Nazareth, might be the promised Messiah. The conviction pressed more and more upon him, notwithstanding every

effort to dismiss it. In vain, repose was sought, and it was not until he had resolved to consult Mr. Houston, and learn the truth, however inimical to his views, and prejudices, that he obtained any rest whatever.

Anxiously did Mr. Mordecai watch a fitting opportunity for conversing with Mr. Houston on a subject now fraught with interest to him; but it was not until the morning of the day of his departure that he summoned courage to do so. Mr. Houston and he were sitting alone in the parlor. "Mr. Houston," he remarked, with some hesitation, "the substance of your New Testament seems to be, that faith alone will save you; yet I cannot help thinking the works of those composing this family and some of Major Nesbit's would avail for that end."

"My dear young friend," replied Mr. Houston, "on that point you are in great darkness. The atonement of the Messiah alone will avail for our justification. We learn from your own law, that without shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin. The sweet Psalmist of Israel proclaims the truth, that 'none doeth good, no, not one.'"

"I am aware," he replied, "that our bloody sacrifices are only types of the one great offering, the Messiah; but when he shall finish the work, I confess I am at a great loss to know."

"Is not Shiloh promised, before Judah's sceptre shall depart?"

"That is my stumbling block; for more than eighteen hundred years, we have been a people scattered to the four winds, and the promise is not yet verified. Who did it please the Lord to bruise in the 53d chapter of Isaiah, Mr. Houston?"

"John tells us it was he on Calvary, of whom, Isaiah says, 'he was led as a lamb to the slaughter.' Why not compare your Testament with the Gospels, Lemuel, and learn the truth that will make you free indeed?"

"Mrs. and Miss Nesbit have read a great portion of the New Testament to me, and of late I have examined

it with the references, but no light is thrown upon it. My mind is dark as Erebus."

"Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law," was the prayer of David, and must be ours also, ere we can comprehend the mysteries of redemption; but the Spirit of God will show us the way, the truth and the life, which is no other than Jesus of Nazareth, your long rejected Messiah."

Lemuel shook his head mournfully. "If that be the only path of light," he replied, "I would not dare seek it, and bring the grey hairs of my father with sorrow to the grave. No! no! I could not openly embrace that doctrine, even were it the truth. I confess my mind has been staggered the last few weeks, in examining Holy Writ."

"Jesus, as an impostor," said Mr. Houston, would never have appeared in a lowly garb and disappointed the expectations of the Jews; neither were his miracles, in attestation of his mission performed in a corner. When he healed the sick, and raised the dead, were these not acts worthy of the Great I AM?

Lemuel, was silent.

Mr. Houston, continued, "As surely, Lemuel, as the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, so surely he is one, and the same with the Babe of Bethlehem, the Son of Mary; the Man of Sorrows, he who was brought from prison and from judgment, and hung upon the accursed tree. When he yielded up his spirit, all nature darkened, and the very rocks quaked as though in agony at the fearful crime of crucifying the Lord of glory. He, is your Prince of peace, your wonderful Counsellor, your mighty God."

The face of Mr. Mordecai, was buried in his hands. As Mr. Houston finished speaking, he raised his head slowly, and replied, "My father's God must be my God, Mr. Houston; his God, the God of Sinai, I must worship. I cannot walk in the footsteps of my sister Miriam, and make miserable his last moments."

Mr. Houston, did not reply, but raising his eyes to heaven, ejaculated, "Oh thou, who wast wounded for

our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities, heal thy servant by thy stripes, and make him to know and love the truth as it is in Jesus ; build him up in most holy faith, and enable him to consecrate himself to his Redeemer."

The head of Mr. Mordecai was again bowed ; not another word was spoken, but the truth had made too deep an impression ever to be erased from his mind. Radcliff had made an arrangement to call for him in his little sleigh on his return from Varastone, but Mrs. and Miss Houston, having some business at Rocklyn, the sleigh of Mr. Mordecai was put in requisition before four o'clock, and he accompanied them as far as Major Nesbit's. The gate was standing open, and the sleigh drove to the door, without being observed. Lemuel entered alone ; the house seemed deserted ; not a sound met his ear. Looking into the library, he saw Marion sitting at a table, her head resting upon her hand, apparently absorbed in thought ; he stood, irresolute whether to enter. Of late, he had observed a reserve toward him, for which he could not account, and, which he gladly would have endeavoured to dissipate, had he been able to summon sufficient courage to rally her upon it. In her society, he never felt at ease, yet sought it whenever opportunity offered ; his feeling, he could scarcely define, but the image of Marion, was ever before him ; her character, he almost revered, but he felt, that Christianity and Judaism had placed an insuperable barrier between them. As he was about retreating, Marion raised her head, the sound of a foot-step arresting her attention, "Mr. Mordecai !" she exclaimed, rising, and advancing to meet him, "are you alone ?"

"No," he replied, playfully taking her offered hand, "with Miss Marion Nesbit, I should never have a feeling of loneliness, but I hope I have not intruded upon her privacy."

"Not at all. Happening to take up Butler, I became interested, and was trying to unravel a knotty question."

"Did you succeed in doing so?"

"No; I lost the thread and interest at the same moment. I believe my thoughts had rather wandered from it."

"Shall we take up Butler together, the few days I remain with you, Miss Nesbit? It would refresh me to do so; my mind has rested so much on the Scriptures of late, that other reading has been neglected."

"May I ask whether any light has been thrown upon them?" enquired Marion, speaking with some hesitation.

"A light far too clear for my happiness; would that I were still enveloped in darkness. I cannot resist the powerful conviction that the Messiah—our Messiah—is one with Jesus of Nazareth; that to Him who hung upon the Cross, and pronounced the work of redemption finished, all our types and shadows point; the same who now sitteth upon the throne, interceding for lost and ruined man, and will at the last day judge the world."

Marion listened eagerly. He continued—"Of these truths my mind is fully convinced, but my father's God—the God of Sinai only—must still be outwardly worshipped. I cannot make my duty to God and man consistent. My father or I must be the sacrifice. I prefer the latter. I cannot obey the command to 'honor my father,' and commit a deed that will render his whole life miserable."

Marion trembled with agitation, as she replied, "Is the soul of Lemuel Mordecai to be lost forever? When the Spirit of God has breathed upon the valley of dry bones, will they still remain lifeless? Mr. Mordecai, believe me, you are periling your immortal happiness. The Lord has opened your eyes to the blessed truths of the Gospel; he offers you to drink of the waters of salvation, but you prefer the wells of Marah. Bitter indeed, will be the remembrance of this rejection when the harvest is passed, the summer is ended, and you are not,—" she stopped, burying her face in her hand-kerchief, she wept convulsively.

Mr. Mordecai gently took her hand, and held it within his: "Had I had your training, Miss Marion, how widely different would have been my views! It was the development of Christianity in your character, that first led me to seek the truth, and the more than brotherly interest I have always felt for you, has given to life a new aspect,—a new impulse. As a Hebrew, I could never hope, but as a—?"

"On what platform would you stand, Mr. Mordecai?" replied Marion, interrupting him, without noticing his question. "'He that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad,' and 'He that is not with me is against me.' These are the words of Him who never errs, and who has proclaimed that the 'Heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, but one jot or one tittle of his law shall not fail.' A divided heart he will never accept." As Marion spoke, her eye flashed, and her character seemed transformed.

In the lowest tone, Mr. Mordecai replied, "Truth has wrought its work upon my understanding, but a coal from the altar of the Almighty has not touched my heart."

"That will avail nothing," she returned, mournfully; "Satan believes and trembles, yet his doom is certain. The Saviour's love to us he sealed with his own blood, and what is demanded, in return? 'Son, give me thine heart.'"

Mr. Mordecai was silent. Marion said no more; the grieved countenance showed what was passing within. "Is Hogan engaged at present?" at length he enquired.

"Not at all. Do you require his services?"

"Will you allow him to place this letter in the office?"

"Certainly," she replied, rising, and touching the bell.

"I intend visiting my sister to-morrow," he said, drawing his chair closely beside Marion; "are you acquainted with the place of her residence, Miss Nesbit?"

"I am not. Miss Mordecai seemed anxious to conceal it; but I have always, as you know, felt the deepest

interest in her: independently of her devotion as a sister, she is extremely fascinating."

"She always possessed the power of pleasing, when she aimed to do so; but her independent, haughty spirit must have been much mellowed. Her pursuits were different from others: although mingling in the gayest scenes, her taste for reading was similar to your own; but in character, she must resemble you far more since her conversion than before. I long to hold communication with her once more."

"She will truly rejoice; she yearned for a reconciliation. Will you inform your father of the visit?"

"Never!"

"Nor take any measures to restore her to him?"

Lemuel shook his head. Hogan came in at this moment, Mordecai placed the note in his hand. Glancing at the direction, he said, "I can leave it at the house, sir; I am going in the immediate neighborhood." With some confusion, and glancing towards Marion, he merely nodded assent, and the door was closed by Hogan. It was unnoticed.

The announcement of the return of Mr. Mordecai had just reached the ears of Houston and Hattie, who were playing in the kitchen with old Susan. Rushing into the library, Hattie soon notified her presence, by placing her arms tightly around his neck, and imprinting a kiss upon his cheek, which was returned most affectionately.

"And where were you, Miss Birdie, that I was not welcomed before this time?"

"We were just in the kitchen: nobody told us you were here, or we would have been in in short order."

"Birdie!" exclaimed her sister.

"Why, Birdie," said her brother, "I wouldn't say that, and I am a boy."

"Why, Houssie, all the boys say it. Tom Jones, and Andie Frisby, and all the rest of them."

"It is very unrefined, Hattie, nevertheless," returned her sister.

"Well, lots of boys say it, sister! Lots! I mean plenty."

"But tell me, Birdie," enquired Mr. Mordecai, "what is the matter with your eyes, to-day? they look as if they had been somewhat grieved; or rather, their little owner."

"I couldn't help crying, Mr. Mordecai, indeed I couldn't, and Houssie cried too, when our teacher kissed us good-bye, this morning; he is never going to teach us again—and perhaps, after next week, we shall never see him, and Lemuel will never play with us any more." Again the tears flowed freely, and the little head nestled closely in his bosom. Mr. Mordecai did not answer, and Marion wondered at his ashy paleness.

"Suppose you and Houssie have a game at ball, Birdie," he said, evidently wishing to turn the conversation, "it is almost a week since I have seen you play."

Hattie sprang from his knee, and in a few moments all her sorrow was forgotten, in interest in her favorite game. Mrs. Nesbit and Cornelia, who were visiting, soon came in, and by four o'clock, the gentlemen returned from Varastone. Major Nesbit, although receiving his half pay, spent much time in the city, buying and selling lands at a percentage, or transacting any business that might add something to his small income. In summer, he tilled his four acres of ground himself, with the slight service Hogan was able to render him.

"Is not this Mr. Ryers' last day," enquired Mr. Nesbit, as he seated himself at the dinner table.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Nesbit, "he dismissed himself this morning, but promised to see us again, very soon."

"Mr. Ryers is not the most economical person in the world," remarked Radcliff; "my livery stable man tells me he has a bill against him, for fifty dollars, for carriage-hire, which he has vainly endeavored to collect. He has been offered several articles of furniture, which he refused, and intends entering a prosecution."

"Carriage-hire!" repeated Cornelia, "that is an air

indeed. I wonder who this princess is, who cannot visit, cannot walk, and remains so entirely secluded?"

"I have no doubt there was ample cause for incurring that expense," said Marion, "it is so unlike Mr. Ryers."

"Well—well! Marion; envelope your friends as you will, with a mantle of charity," returned Radcliff, "I do not think you will find them at all immaculate. Mr. Fitch told me he had heard whispers, not quite creditable to this spotless being. She is accused of lofty airs, and pride, by no means fitting her station."

"I," said Cornelia, "never admired Mr. Ryers; his bearing is almost too dignified for a nursery teacher. Notwithstanding, all my efforts to remember who he was, I never felt any thing but awe in his presence. There is so much assumption in his deep bow, and extremely grave demeanor."

"What does he assume?" asked her father, gravely.

"Every thing, papa; I am sure he has nothing on which to base his importance, neither wealth, nor position; a good education, is the only thing of which he can boast."

"Nothing more, certainly," replied Major Nesbit; "nothing but education, refinement, piety and splendid talents. Strange, he should ever raise his head in the society of Miss Cornelia Nesbit." This was said so gravely, that Cornelia's eyes fell before him, and the topic was quickly changed. Marion had been a close observer of the countenance of Mr. Mordecai, his color changed, and he vainly endeavored to rally, and converse in a low tone, with Howard, who sat next him. What can be the connecting link; thought Marion.

As they rose from the table, the sleigh of Dr. Lodi, was seen coming up the lawn, with Mr. Mordecai seated beside him.

"Ah, Ulie," said his uncle, rubbing his hands as he entered, and drawing very closely to the cheerful fire, "Mrs. Nesbit has you on her roll again, I perceive; a daily visit from the elders, and a lengthy one from this young scion of the house, is being somewhat sociable. Major Nesbit, do you coincide with me in opinion?"

"Our only regret is, that Lemuel's visit is drawing so rapidly to a close, but we have been much gratified that your daily call here was not omitted during his absence."

"Based entirely on selfish motives, sir; the centripetal force, most powerful."

"Shall we continue to be the centre," enquired Cornelia, "after your principal attraction has been removed?"

"Assuming that position, on philosophical principles, certainly not, Miss Nesbit; but as powerful attraction still remains, we shall often be drawn to this pleasant family circle. We feel that we shall receive a kind welcome."

"Assurances, I hope, are not needed, Dr. Lodi, at this late hour," said Mrs. Nesbit.

"None whatever, Mrs. Nesbit," said old Mr. Mordecai; "in your friendship we have the most implicit confidence; but, Dr. Lodi, you forget you are to sup with Rabbi Leyden, this evening."

"A word with you, and uncle, father, before you leave us," said Mr. Mordecai, rising and advancing towards the library. Both followed.

"Have you a message for the Rabbi my son, that you wished to see us privately?"

"I abhor his very name," he replied, scornfully.

"Lemuel! are you aware of whom you are speaking?"

"Perfectly, father; but his conduct to Miriam showed a heart of adamant."

"Zeal for our law prompted his actions, Lemuel."

"Yes, used as a mantle to indulge an arrogant will. Uncle Paul, do you think this man honors his high calling?"

"He is our Rabbi, Lemuel; as such, I pay him outward respect; as a man, I certainly would not select him as a friend."

"But of him I did not wish to speak. I desire to ask a question of a very different nature. Did our mother leave property, father?"

"A small sum, which she willed to me during life; but if you desire it, my son, I will willingly resign it to you."

"No, father; pardon my alluding to a painful subject, but it was with reference to Miriam I spoke."

The voice of the old man faltered, as he replied, "It is impossible, my son, she must be to us as though she had never been. An apostate from her fathers; she must remain accursed."

"Is Miriam in pecuniary difficulties?" asked Dr. Lodi, as Mr. Mordecai arose and left the room; "if so, gladly will I divide my worldly portion with her. Dear child, my heart yearns for her, although I am forbidden communication. Lemuel, Holy Writ, according to our interpretation, I almost begin to question. The Talmud carries falsehood with it. The New Testament, I am now examining; if it lead to the conviction that Jesus of Nazareth is other than we suppose him, I will confess him, let the anathemas of the church be poured out with all their virulence upon me. When I see the spirit with which his followers are actuated, I cannot avoid comparisons. How can I offer aid to Miriam?"

"Not possibly; unless you proffered a return of friendship first."

"That step would be a reproach, reflected upon your father, and would lead me into difficulties, for which I am not yet prepared. I cannot say what may be my future course."

"*My* mind is fixed; before she leaves these shores, I will receive her forgiveness and her blessing."

"Does she intend leaving her native land?" enquired Dr. Lodi, with emotion.

"I cannot tell, and dread to hear the decision. It is the earnest wish of her husband, but she is reluctant to do so; her heart is here, with us; with those who have cast her off as a thing of nought."

"Paul Lodi!" called Mr. Mordecai, from the parlor. "Have you taken up your permanent abode also?"

"At your service in a moment, Mr. Mordecai," he replied, buttoning his overcoat quickly. Turning to

Lemuel, he said, "Say to Miriam all I feel; but that is impossible. Breaking one link, may cement another closely."

Of his meaning, Lemuel was in doubt; without replying, he followed him immediately to the parlor. The gentlemen took their leave

The following day, while sitting at the breakfast table, a letter was handed Mr. Mordecai. There was no mistaking the small, beautiful hand of Miriam. Asking to be excused, he hurriedly retired to his chamber, to peruse it. It was a double letter, and his heart sank when, on opening it, the cheqne appeared to view. It was as follows:

"MY MUCH LOVED BROTHER:

"Your gift I would have retained gratefully, but Mr. Ryers felt unwilling I should do so, although he unites with me in thanking you for your kind wishes. As you proposed placing it out for the benefit of the children, and Mr. R. did not feel it his province to do this, I will ask you to make an investment, by which they may benefit some time hence. My point is gained; we remain in Varastone, in my native land, where I still hope and pray to be united in the bonds of Christian fellowship with my dear father, and much loved brother. To-day, Mr. Ryers commences to lecture between the hours of twelve and one. To-morrow we remove nearer the college; we shall board for the present, but if Mr. R. can obtain a few pupils to board with us, we shall then resume housekeeping.

"Your own and only sister,

"MIRIAM."

Lemuel's heart was thrilled with joy; the ocean, at least, would not separate them; his mind, soon wrapped in thought, forgetful of the present, and all its realities, was carried far into the future; the bond of union was again sealed; the daughter and sister had assumed her position in the house of Mordecai; light was restored to their dwelling; gladness reigned, and a hymn of praise

and thanksgiving ascended, and prayer was offered in the name of—he started—his reverie was broken ; the present was again with him ; the letter once more carefully perused, and the hour for the lecture noted. Miriam shall be mine, he said, as he slowly folded the letter ; “ but I must act with caution ; my father’s sanction could not be obtained. I must disregard it. No longer bound by Jewish fetters, which recognize no human tie, I am now free.” With bended knee, he sought the blessing of God upon his sister ; but his prayer was cold and lifeless, and rising dissatisfied, he saw the Bible lying open upon the table. He turned to it. “ Because I have called, and you have refused,” met his eye ; he saw no more, but, closing the Book, he hastily endeavored to forget the passage, and again joined the family in the parlor.

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## CHAPTER VII.

“ He shareth his joys with thee,  
And is glad to bear part in thy sorrows.”

BETWEEN the hours of twelve and one, the sleigh of Mr. Mordecai stopped before the door of a small, neat two-story house, just on the outskirts of Varastone. His ring was answered by a little girl about nine years of age.

“ Is Mrs. Ryers at home ? ” he enquired.

“ Yes, sir ; Miss Ryers is at home, but she is engaged.”

“ Will you give this to her ? ” he said, handing a card, and stepping into a small parlor, the only one the house afforded. The child hesitated, “ She don’t see nobody, sir. Besides, she’s just a putting the baby to sleep, and agoing to wash Uley.”

Mr. Mordecai sighed, “ Give it to her,” he said, “ and if she cannot see me, you can return and say so.”

The girl disappeared, and soon her voice was heard in a room adjoining the parlor. In a loud tone, she delivered her message, adding, "I couldn't help it, Miss Ryers, indeed I couldn't; he came right in of hisself, and he's one of the grandest looking gentleman I ever seen, and he's got a sleigh just like high quality."

The sound of his sister's voice in reply, almost unmanned him. "You did quite right, Jane, and when Rebecca is asleep, put this white apron on Uley, and bring him into the parlor."

"Parlor," repeated Lemuel, "can this be my sister's residence, while my father is in the possession of such an income?" His eye, took in at a glance every article of furniture; the fawn colored merino curtains, arranged so tastefully with its silken cord and tassel, he well remembered as her cloak; the plain muslin veil, he judged to be her dress. On the mantle, stood two Parian marble statutes, his own gifts; a guitar, one that had whiled away many an hour for him, lay upon a rich work-stand, a Christmas present from her loving father was engraved upon it in gilt letters. Several splendidly bound books lay upon a small centre table; tokens of affection from one, who, had since disowned and disinherited her. A miniature was lying beside them; he opened it, it was his sister and himself, taken in childhood; his arm encircled her waist, and his eye was turned upon her with a sweet smile; around it was engraven, "May this staff never prove a broken reed." The picture was quickly closed, and almost thrown upon the table, and Mr. Mordecai, unconscious of his sister's presence, who had just entered the room, threw himself into a chair, burying his face in his hands. Feelings of the deepest remorse were awakened; vividly did he recall the time, when, viewing that picture with her, he smiled incredulously at the possibility of such an event. "Truly, my own Miriam," he would say, "my right hand will forget its cunning, my mind lose its vigor, and my heart become callous indeed, ere such a bond as exists between us could be severed." Again, he arose, and opened the picture, gazed intently

upon it; his sister, stood awaiting his recognition. Her presence was unheeded; his eye seemed riveted to one point; his gaze became so fixed, so wild, that Miriam, in alarm, came forward, and laid her hand upon his arm: he started, looked wildly upon her, then, dashing the picture upon the ground, crushed it to atoms. "It is false," he cried, in a voice of thunder, "as false, as treacherous. Miriam is a broken reed."

"Lemuel, my darling brother," said Miriam, "will you not let me welcome you to my home? May I not once more call you brother? It was only mistaken zeal on your part, that separated us."

Suddenly, his whole manner changed. In a low, plaintive tone, he said, "Tread lightly on the ashes of Miriam, her body sleeps to the morning of the resurrections, but her soul," lowering his voice to a whisper, "rests in Jesus."

His sister wept convulsively. "Miriam is with you, Lemuel," she said, placing her arm over his shoulder, and endeavoring to draw him to a seat, "I am your sister, your Miriam, your loved one."

Again the eye of her brother turned wildly toward her; slowly repeating, "My Miriam, my loved one; a staff, a broken reed." Then rising, with one arm extended, he came towards her. "Did I prove a staff to Miriam?" he muttered, rather than spoke, "did I uphold her footsteps? No! no! I proved her murderer, and the blood of the injured Miriam crieth from the ground." As he spoke, his posture became more and more erect, his whole frame stiffened, and with a wild cry, he fell lifeless to the ground. Miriam, sprang forward, and steeping a napkin in water, threw herself beside him, and bound it around his temples. The alarm was soon given by the girl, who, at that moment brought Ulie into the parlor, and the coachman, with Dr. Monroe, an opposite neighbor, came in to render any assistance that might be necessary. The doctor ordered the feet to be placed in mustard immediately.

"Is your master, usually easily excited?" he enquired of the servant.

"No master of mine, sir," was the reply, "I am a hostler, belonging to the Queen Hotel, and not having much to do just now, Mr. Jones spared me to drive Mr. Mordecai's sleigh, until he was well enough to return home."

"Then he has been indisposed before?"

"Illness has weakened his nervous system, and probably induced this attack," rejoined Mrs. Ryers. "Do you consider his life in danger, sir?"

"No, there is a tendency of blood to the head; but there has been no delay, consequently, no danger; apoplexy would have occurred, had he been alone. I will assist you, my man, in placing him upon the sofa; let his head be high, Mrs. Ryers, apply ice to it, and keep the feet warm. In his weak state, blood-letting would be injurious. It is only temporary; I will remain with him until the return of Mr. Ryers."

Expressing her gratitude for his kindness, after following his prescriptions closely, she retired to her chamber, to give vent to feelings she desired to conceal from the stranger.

"I'm a thinking, doctor," said the driver, "that I'd better be agoin' to tell Major Nesbit's people, or they'll be a feelin' some oneasy. He told Miss Marion, an hour would bring him back, and its been that quite, since we started. Miss Marion and Miss Cornelia, are waitin' to ride."

"Certainly; your services are no longer needed here. You can merely say, that Mr. Mordecai is quite unwell at the house of Mr. Ryers, and deems it prudent to make no farther exertion." The man nodded, and without casting another glance at either patient or physician, jumped into the sleigh, and was soon out of sight.

Mrs. Ryers, after making some arrangements for the comfort of the children, returned to the parlor, and seated herself near the sofa. Her dejected countenance, and eyes swollen with weeping, surprised the doctor.

The report of the illness of the wealthy Mr. Mordecai, and his consequent detention at the house of Major Nesbit, had reached him; that Mr. Ryers was tutor to the children there, he knew; but how those so dissimilar in rank and circumstances should be so closely linked in affection, he could not imagine. Around Mrs. Ryers, there had always been thrown a mystery; her extreme seclusion had elicited some remarks, and Dr. Monroe had looked with interest on those apparently so unlike the humble occupants of the neighbouring tenements. His curiosity was now completely aroused, but delicacy forbade its gratification. For some time, there was perfect silence. At length Mr. Mordecai slowly opened his eyes, and feebly enquired, "Where am I?" Miriam started, and was about rising, but a glance from the doctor arrested her, and she turned towards the window, in order to hide her emotion.

The question was again repeated.

"You have been ill, Mr. Mordecai," he replied; "overcome by too much exertion. You are at the house of Mr. Ryers, but in a few days, I trust, will be able to return home." As the name was pronounced, a flush passed over his fine features, and again closing his eyes, he remained perfectly silent. At that moment the sleigh of Mr. Mordecai stopped before the door. Dr. Monroe glanced towards the window. Miriam turned from it. "Major and Mrs. Nesbit," he remarked, "and—let me see,—that surely is Dr. Lodi! Yes, there is no mistake; the great Dr. Lodi, of Rocklyn—the most eloquent lecturer of his day. Major Nesbit has obtained the best medical aid. If you will allow me to do so, Mrs. Ryers," he said, rising, "I will meet them in the entry; so much excitement might produce evil consequences."

"Can they be taken to the chamber above?" she said, a slight shade passing over her brow, that might be construed into mortified feeling.

"Certainly; I will go up with them, and resign the case to Dr. Lodi."

The door closed ; Miriam was left alone. Seating herself on a low stool, beside her brother, she gently took his hand. Again opening his eyes, he murmured, "Miriam, can you forgive me ?"

"Forgive ! My dearest brother," she replied, laying her hand affectionately upon his brow, and kissing it. "I have nought to forgive ; but the anticipation of a reunion with my Lemuel, my Ulie of former days, banishes all care. Truly, my cup will overflow with blessings."

"Miriam," he said, sadly, "I have much to be forgiven."

She pressed his hand warmly : "We are all sinners, Ulie, sinners of the deepest die. There is but one fountain for all uncleanness ; the blood of —," she paused—

"Of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin," he continued, "I know it, Miriam, I feel it ; His atoning sacrifice will avail—but not for me. The son of Solomon Mordecai, cannot publicly renounce Judaism, and a secret service, would not be acceptable in the sight of our great Mediator."

"Let us defer the momentous subject until you have more strength, Ulie ; your eyes will be opened to see the need of forsaking father and mother, houses and lands, if he require it at your hand."

As she finished speaking, the two physicians entered. "Allow me to introduce Dr. Lodi, Mrs. Ryers, he is the uncle of our patient Mr. Mordecai ; I would most willingly resign my charge, but he declines prescribing except in consultation." The face of Dr. Lodi was quickly averted, and walking towards the window, a tear was hastily dashed aside.

Mrs. Ryers did not reply, but stood anxiously watching him. "Uncle Paul," she at length said, in a low tone, "is your visit entirely to Lemuel ?"

"No, no, Miriam !" he replied, seizing her hand ; his eye turned to Dr. Monroe, who immediately left the room and returned to Major and Mrs. Nesbit.

"I thought to be able to command myself before the

stranger, but found it impossible. I have passed a night of agony, Miriam; your image was ever present with me. I have come to ask a reconciliation, though all the Jewish anathemas, be thundered out against me."

Miriam's head sank upon his shoulder; she wept. "Say that I am forgiven," he whispered, kissing her affectionately, "it is my heart's desire to be once more reconciled."

"Truly and fully," she replied, returning his embrace warmly; "but Lemuel—"

"Yes, Lemuel must be our first care. Was not excitement the cause of this attack?"

"Excitement from association."

"It will pass away, probably, without any recurrence," he said, as he drew near the sofa. "Ulie, my dear boy, do you recognize your uncle?" Lemuel pressed his hand.

"Perfectly, uncle; my mind is clear, yet capable of little thought, and my body extremely feeble."

"Quiet and calmness will soon restore both to their proper equilibrium. I will now see this Dr. Monroe, and consult with him on the case, for form's sake. You are his patient for the present, Ulie. Miriam, will you see your friends up stairs, and say to Dr. Monroe, that I will await him in the parlor?"

Miriam arose immediately, although the deep crimson that mantled her cheeks showed the cost of the effort she was making. "Politeness demanded it, ere this," she said, "but I lingered for the return of James."

"I must know him also; report speaks of him as one fitted, in every respect for our Miriam."

She looked sadly as she replied, "The sacrifices made for me, have never reached the ears of mortal. Would that I were more worthy of them. But I hear his footstep in the passage." Mr. Ryers entered. He had had intimation of some difficulty at home, of what nature he knew not, but excitement had lent color to a cheek naturally pallid, and increased the lustre of his dark grey eye.

"How thankful I am you are well, Miriam," he said,

not noticing the strangers, as he met her at the door of the room, "rumor spoke of trouble. Are the children safe?"

"The children are well," she replied, advancing a few steps into the room. Mr. Ryers followed. He started with surprise at seeing two strangers—one extended on the sofa, but, immediately recovering his self-possession, he bowed gracefully to them.

"My uncle, Dr. Lodi, James, and brother Lemuel," she added, in a low tremulous tone. He extended his hand, Dr. Lodi shook it warmly.

"Difference of sentiment alone has separated us, Mr. Ryers; will you, at this late hour, accept not my hand only, but my heart also?"

"Has that barrier been removed?" he enquired, politely, but not cordially, retaining the hand within his own.

"In so far that the partition wall is broken down, but the foundation stone remains yet to be laid for a new structure."

Mr. Ryers gravely replied, "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner."

Dr. Lodi said nothing, and Mr. Ryers, drawing a chair near the sofa, took the hand that was lying across the lap of Miriam. The eyes of Mr. Mordecai rested upon him, then closing them he feebly said, "May all barriers to our union, Mr. Ryers, henceforth be overthrown."

"I can truly offer an amen to that wish, and may our feet be set upon a rock, even the tried corner-stone, the Rock of Israel."

The front door closing heavily, recalled Miriam to the recollection that her friends were still neglected, and taking Mr. Ryers' arm, they proceeded up stairs. The story of Lemuel was briefly told, and the interest of Mr. Ryers greatly excited. Before opening the door, she said, "I should like some little change in domestic arrangements for a few days. Jane's mother is a good cook. Can we afford it?"

"Major Nesbit settled with me to-day, and Howard, with the utmost delicacy, offered me the loan of fifty dollars to defray the bill of Mr. Fitch. You can, therefore, act as you deem necessary; only," he said, smiling, "always remembering, no pecuniary favors accepted."

Miriam nodded, and Mr. Ryers opened the door of the chamber. Little Rebecca had awaked, and was seated in her night-gown on the knee of Major Nesbit; her large eyes were fixed upon him as he related a story. Lemuel was standing beside him, listening intently also.

Mrs. Nesbit had found a child's unfinished dress upon the window-seat, and was busily engaged sewing. "Miss Mordecai!" exclaimed Mrs. Nesbit, laying down the work and rising. Major Nesbit, placing the child on one arm, came forward with a look of surprised inquiry.

Mrs. Ryers, extending a hand to each, said, "Miss Mordecai is Mrs. Ryers. My brother's visit, to-day, makes concealment no longer necessary; it was alone to save him, and our father unpleasant remarks and consequent mortification, that I chose to remain unknown. Your prayers, my dear, dear Mrs. Nesbit, have restored him to me. He has come to seek a re-union with his only sister; and, I trust, in time, to declare himself a disciple of my Redeemer." Unable to utter another word, she threw herself upon the neck of Mrs. Nesbit, and wept.

"Shall you and I, Major Nesbit, return to Mr. Mordecai?" asked Mr. Ryers; "Miriam will soon be composed. Come, Ulie, leave mamma, dear; she will be quite well directly." Unused to disobey, the child came forward, yet he looked so imploringly towards his mother, that Mr. Ryers, with a smile, closed the door upon him.

"Where is Miriam, Mr. Ryers?" Mr. Mordecai enquired, as soon as he perceived they were alone.

"With Mrs. Nesbit; to whom she did, and did not need an introduction. How glad I am to have my pride indulged at last; it was hard to possess such a gem, and have it enclosed always in a casket. I yielded to her

persuasions to save your pride. How she loves you, Lemuel ; she called her first born for you. I confess I was disappointed; I seldom gave the boy his title; and would have contended against the name of our daughter, had it not been that of my mother's also ; the M. was added ; the fraternal name of her grandmother, Madison."

"Never jealous for yourself, Mr. Ryers?" enquired Dr. Lodi, fearing the course of the present current.

"No, doctor," he replied with a forced smile, "I have sorrowed with Miriam, been troubled for her, but never in the slightest degree, grieved at, or by her. I believe Miriam as near perfection as the attainment is possible in our humanity."

"Not to be outdone ; the praises about coming from me would be cast into Erebus," cried Dr. Lodi, heartily laughing.

"Not to be gainsayed, uncle," rejoined Mr. Mordecai, "I never thought my sister other even than perfect, and Ryers, I confess, I have been often jealous of you."

"Needlessly, then, I assure you ; you lost nothing in my gaining Miriam ; she is as devoted to you as when united in Judaism ; but I excite you." The arm of Mr. Mordecai concealed the expression of his countenance, nor was there any farther conversation until Mrs. Nesbit with Mrs. Ryers, and little Lemuel, joined the circle. He ran over to his sister, who had been quietly sitting upon her father's knee, and was very ready for his boisterous mirth. Mr. Ryers put her down, and they were playing with great glee, when her mother said, "I wonder if little Rebecca has spoken to her Uncle Lemuel," at the same time, leading her toward the sofa. The child hid her face in her mother's dress, and answered pettishly, "Etta don't want to." Mrs. Ryers opened the door, and placing her outside, said very gently, "Etta may come back, when she is obedient. Mamma is ashamed of her little daughter," and closing it she returned to her seat, and called Lemuel to her side. There was a low sob in the entry for a few minutes, then a slight tap at the

door, followed by, "I will be dood, mamma." Mr. Ryers opened it. Walking immediately up to the sofa, she dropped a courtesy, at the same time extending a tiny left hand, she said, smiling through her tears, "How tu tu, Misser Mordetai." "Right hand, Etta," said her mother. The hand was quickly changed, "Is you better now, Mr. Mordetai?"

"Much better, darling; but I am Uncle Lemuel."

"Uncle Lemuel! I sought you was Mr. Mordetai, that was at Birdie's house, isn't you?"

"I am, Birdie's Mr. Mordecai, but your dear uncle; mamma is my sister, and that makes you my little niece."

"Am I your little niece, too?" asked Lemuel, stepping up, and looking anxiously into the face of Mr. Mordecai, "I would like to have you for my Uncle Lemuel."

"Certainly. I would like to have two little nieces, and be Uncle Lemuel to both of them."

"Children, you are troubling your uncle, come to me," said Mrs. Ryers. In a moment they obeyed, and were immediately after quietly seated in the corner, whispering; fearing to disturb "our sick uncle," as Etta said.

"Unless this consultation soon take place," said Dr. Lodi, "I fear our patient, as a patient, will slip through our fingers. It is a case that requires present attention. Is our patient doctor still waiting?"

"At his office," was the reply, "when you are at leisure to send for him."

"Let us by all means expedite this matter. Shall I walk over for him?"

"Not at all, uncle; I will send a messenger," replied Mrs. Ryers, rising, pleased to have an excuse for giving a few household directions.

"We have consumed so much time that but fifteen minutes are left us. I dine with Mr. Houston to-day, and would not keep their dinner waiting. Your father left home unexpectedly this morning, Lemuel, on business of an important nature; he desired me to say he

would not be able to return until the day after to-morrow."

The countenance of Lemuel indicated relief. "To-morrow, you dine with us, doctor," said Mrs. Nesbit; "will Lemuel be able to join us?"

"With Dr. Monroe's approbation, he will. I will step over to the office, ask him to meet me here this evening, apologise for his detention, and render all things as pleasant as though we had consulted in due form."

"You and Mr. Ryers will accompany Mr. Mordecai, also?" she asked, turning to Miriam. "Of the children, we should be glad to have the charge, while you are moving; shall it not be so?"

"Thank you, Mrs. Nesbit, it will relieve me of a world of anxiety to know the children are safe and happy. If Mr. Ryers have no engagement, we will accept your kind invitation with pleasure."

"I have no prior one," replied Mr. Ryers, bowing courteously, "and shall hold myself engaged to Mrs. Nesbit, for the morrow."

The visit of Dr. Lodi was soon made; and Dr. Monroe, much gratified by the call of so great a man, received his apologies without hesitation, and promised to attend carefully to any symptoms that might appear in the interval. Kissing his niece and the children, affectionately, he, with Major and Mrs. Nesbit, took his leave, and was soon on his way to Mr. Houston's. Dinner was partly over when they arrived, but the kind welcome given him prevented any awkward feeling at the interruption. His object was gained; he had saved the feelings of Miriam.

"Here at last," said Cornelia, as her mother alighted from the sleigh; "really, Marm, I thought you would never return. I promised Emilie Graham to call for her; she must suppose we have broken down by the way. Come, Marion, do not delay; we shall have but little time for a pleasant drive."

The pallid face and distressed countenance of Marion,

a little surprised her parents, as she came forward to reply. "I do not intend going, Cornelia."

"Oh, very well," she answered, evidently pleased with the arrangement; "the children can stay at home also, and I can take the three young ladies. It was quite awkward inviting only one. Drive on, quickly, Peter, to Mr. Graham's."

"Is Mr. Mordecai dangerously sick, father?" Marion enquired.

Major Nesbit's attention was directed to Cornelia, he did not hear the question.

"No, daughter," her mother replied, "he is almost restored already, and hopes to dine with us to-morrow."

Marion suddenly disappeared.

"Cornelia," called Major Nesbit, "are you aware those horses have been running since eight this morning?"

"I suppose I knew it, papa, but didn't consider much about it."

"Then, I will just remind you that they have done their duty for this day."

"Papa!"

"They must be put up immediately. Let Hogan take the children over, to repay them in a slight degree for the loss of their ride. You can accompany them, and state the case to the ladies."

Cornelia slowly and reluctantly obeyed, murmuring, "I wish his sleigh was at Rocklyn; we should not then be subjected to these disappointments." The sleigh in a short time returned, and Cornelia, without coming into the parlor, sullenly retired to her own room, intending to while away an hour over a sentimental novel, but hearing animated conversation below, she threw aside her book, and descended to the Library. Howard and Radcliff entered at the same moment.

"Why, Marion, my dear sister," exclaimed Howard, "what great tidings have you to announce? Your eyes are fairly starting with surprise. Do let us hear it, if of a pleasant nature."

"Nellie, here," remarked Radcliff, "looks as if she

could bring a weight of woful intelligence to counter-balance any pleasurable."

"My guiding star was blotted out at the time of my birth," she replied, pettishly, "therefore my path is always dark, and I a victim to disappointment."

"Perhaps Marion can throw a few rays of sunshine on your path," replied Howard. "Let us have it, sis."

"I refer you to papa, Howard, or perhaps mamma will enlighten you."

"Certainly; Mr. and Mrs. Ryers dine with us to-morrow."

"Mrs. Ryers!" exclaimed Radcliff, scornfully. "Will the Goddess of Mystery condescend to unveil herself to mortal eyes? Does Mordecai leave us before that time, mother?"

"No, not until the day following; but what bearing has the enquiry on the visit in question?"

"I only thought there would be little in common between the wife of Birdie's tutor and a gentleman in Mr. Mordecai's position. They say that splendid woman, his sister, was one of the proudest of the inhabitants of Rocklyn, and, judging from his reserved deportment, he is not a whit behind her. He has certainly never sought the acquaintance of Mr. Ryers any more than I, and the other day, he walked quite a distance from the path to avoid merely touching his hat to him."

"We will endeavor to appease his wrath by extending our invitation to that splendid woman also," returned Marion, archly.

"Where is Mordecai?" enquired Howard.

"He was taken sick at Mr. Ryers'," replied his father. "Dr. Lodi was here when the news came, and went with us to see him. He hopes to return to-morrow, to dine with us, accompanied by his sister, formerly that splendid woman, but for the last five years the wife of Birdie's tutor."

"The wife of Mr. Ryers!" exclaimed Howard. "How rejoiced I am he has a wife worthy of him. That fasci-

nating being could not but render life happy under any circumstances."

Radcliff was silent from mortification.

"Well, Rad," said Cornelia, "you and I are rather in an awkward plight, after all that we have said before Mr. Mordecai."

"Mordecai is in fault, not I; his absurd secrecy led to all this evil."

"Henceforth, judge not from the outward appearance," replied Major Nesbit, "and allow intellect and merit to hold their place. When viewing any object through the medium of pride, a cloud often intervenes to obscure the vision."

"I will plead a prior engagement to-morrow," said Cornelia.

"And I, shall not return home," returned Radcliff.

"It is my desire," said Major Nesbit, "that you and Cornelia may be here to receive our guests, and atone in some measure for former ill treatment."

"The children will remain a few days with us," said Mrs. Nesbit; "they will, of course, be under your charge, Marion."

"They are not the slightest trouble, mother. I never saw such trained children."

"Yes, I observed to-day their mother instilled perfect obedience."

The following morning, early, Dr. Lodi came alone. Mr. Mordecai had slept little, suffering from intense headache. The doctor, who had accepted the invitation of Mr. Houston to remain all night, in order that he might see him in the evening, found him so much worse, that he did not again leave him until the morning. "The pain has now much abated," he said, "but any exertion would be unsafe. To-morrow morning I hope he will be able to return; but Mrs. Ryers desires me to say she must decline now making her visit, until she is settled in her accommodations. Her time will be fully occupied in moving after to-day."

"But the children?" enquired Mrs. Nesbit.

"With your permission, Mrs. Nesbit, I will return for

them. Miriam declined sending them so early, fearing they might be in the way. They are now treading about the house, like little spectres, lest they should disturb 'Uncle Lemuel.' The restraint will become rather irksome to the little things."

"Do please bring them, doctor," said little Hattie, clapping her hands with delight, "we will have lovely fun."

"Then get your bonnet, Miss Birdie, if mamma will permit you, and we will soon bring them to enjoy this lovely fun."

Consent was readily given, and Hattie, in high glee, equipped in hat and cloak, set off with the doctor. In about an hour they returned, and soon the little group, after kissing grandma Nesbit, preceded by the delighted Houston, were on their way to an upper room called by the family the nursery, which the children appropriated to themselves, and designated by the name of play-room. The principal attraction, however, this morning, was sister Marion, who was sitting there "only sewing;" Hattie said, "and would find ever so many nice plays for them."

"You will return and dine with us, Dr. Lodi?" said Mrs. Nesbit.

"With pleasure I will do so; but I must be in Rocklyn by eleven; that is my lecture hour. By two I must see Lemuel, and will remain with him until your dinner hour. Mrs. Nesbit," he hesitatingly added, "Lemuel desired me to say that if his father returned before him, it would be well to conceal his recent sickness, and spare him needless anxiety. There are also reasons why he would not wish his father informed of his visit to Mrs. Ryers."

"Please say to Lemuel, doctor, his father's feelings shall be carefully considered, and all communications come from himself."

"Thank, you—thank, you, my dear Mrs. Nesbit, but time is waning—I must now leave you. This will, I trust, be my last winter in college. In the spring, my intention is to resign my professorship, retire from all

practice, and make a two years trip to Europe. My health is suffering from a weight of care. I feel it will be the best means of reestablishing it."

"We shall miss you exceedingly; nevertheless, health is an important object."

"The sacrifice will be great—particularly as the health of Mr. Mordecai is evidently failing; affliction has made sad inroads on his constitution."

"Is there no hope of the void being again filled?"

Dr. Lodi shook his head. "As soon will the sun depart from his course, Mrs. Nesbit, as Solomon Mordecai swerve from his purpose—even though his heart should break in the determination."

"Will not Lemuel advise his father of his reconciliation with his sister?"

"If he do, he will incur his serious displeasure, with a positive prohibition of intercourse for the future. His Hebrew prejudices cast a dark shade over his kindly nature."

"Do you term them prejudices, doctor?"

"Six months since, I would have used the word principles; but the Lord, I trust, has opened my eyes. I have studied his word, with much prayer, and have long since been convinced of the truth of Messiah's mission, although too proud to confess Him before men; but the solemn admonition of Mr. Houston, yesterday, when I opened my heart to him, spoke volumes to my conscience, and in the silent watches of the night, while sitting beside the couch of our dear boy, I entered into a new covenant with my Maker, not of works, but of grace, and trust I was accepted in the Beloved. Early this morning, the delightful intercourse I held with James and Miriam, refreshed my spirit, strengthened my faith, and confirmed me in my intention to come out openly on the side of the Lord."

With an overflowing heart, Mrs. Nesbit brushed away a rising tear.

"I must now leave you, Mrs. Nesbit, but, if my life be spared, ere many more suns have set upon me, you will see an old man, whose whole life he has spent in

contemning the name of the Most High, consecrating the poor remainder of his days, in the little chapel beside you, to the service of his Saviour. I desire, if practicable, to worship in the same sanctuary, with those who have been the means of leading me from darkness, into the marvellous light of the gospel."

"We have just communed in our little building, and three months will elapse before there is another season."

"It may be better, perhaps, to test my strength of purpose; though I bless God, it is his work, not mine, and will surely stand. I will endeavor to obtain a pew, and have the privilege of worshiping there, and be enabled to make myself, in some degree, serviceable."

Dr. Lodi took his leave; and Mrs. Nesbit sought Marion, to communicate the glad tidings, which the recording angel had already announced to a rejoicing heavenly choir.

Mr., Mrs., and Miss Houston, together with Dr. Lodi, formed a portion of the family group at dinner; but Radcliff and Cornelia being present, no allusion was made to any change: but the happy, although chastened expression, on the countenance of Dr. Lodi, spoke the peace that reigned within.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

"I hear the communing of friends;  
Ye speak out the fulness of your souls."

AT eight in the morning, the sleigh of Dr. Lodi was at the door of Mr. Ryers'; Dr. Monroe came over to meet him. After a courteous salutation, they entered the house together. Mr. Mordecai was already dressed, and lying upon the parlor sofa.

"I perceive you still purpose making the trial of your strength," said Dr. Monroe, laying his hand upon a pulse, beating far too quickly. "Do you not think it an unwise step, Dr. Lodi?"

"Rather so, I must confess; but as this young gentleman seems already equipped for travel, we must only exercise our skill in preventing evil consequences."

"Do not delay, uncle, time is passing. I am sorry to act in opposition to your wishes, doctor, but I cannot remain longer. Miriam, are you ready? I want you to ride up with us."

"I intend doing so, Lemuel, but must return as soon as I see that you have not suffered by the exertion."

Dr. Monroe politely bade "Good morning," and returned to his office.

"He is evidently offended," Lemuel remarked; "but if father return this morning, he must not find me here."

Miriam sighed deeply. "Yes, it is a stern necessity, Lemuel," she replied, "which, I trust, will not exist forever."

"Father's disposition is peculiar, Miriam, and his bigotry invulnerable. What would you advise, my dear sister?"

"Prayer, Lemuel, constant prayer; no other effort will avail. I much fear he will separate himself from you, Uncle Paul."

"It is *my* dread, also, that he will endeavor to do so, but I will not permit it. I will visit him, though he forbid me; I will write to him, when absent, though my letters should remain unopened. I cannot give him up. I am not his child; he cannot drive me from his presence; neither dependent, he cannot deprive me of a maintenance. The anathemas of the church he cannot call down upon me; the Lord has freed me from its shackles. Oh, that I could impart to him some of the hopes, the joys, the peace, I experience in believing; a peace which even my dear brother cannot disturb, though he should call the whole Jewish church to his aid against me. At nine he returns. I will then seek an opportunity."

"Nine!" exclaimed Mr. Mordecai, starting from the sofa. "Let us go immediately. My head is aching sadly from excitement. I am sure I shall be better when at

Major Nesbit's. How sad, that I should feel as a culprit in my sister's house!"

"It is needful for the present, on your part, Lemuel, not on mine. I shall visit you freely," said Miriam."

"Not freely," rejoined Lemuel, "as, for a season they must be unknown to my father; but on frequent visits I am resolved."

Mr. Mordecai was carefully seated in the sleigh by Dr. Lodi, and was soon quietly resting on the sofa in the library of Major Nesbit, the windows darkened, and Mrs. Nesbit gently bathing his temples with ice water. His mind entirely at ease in regard to his father's return; he slept, and awaked, feeling much refreshed, and his head almost free from pain.

In the course of a few hours, another letter came from Mr. Mordecai, lamenting further detention for a week. His closing words were: "May the blessing of the God of Abraham rest upon my boy, and may he ever remain a firm defender of the faith of his fathers, is the sincere prayer of one whose happiness is centered in his only stay,"

There was an undefined feeling of relief as Lemuel closed the letter. There would be time for his system to react, and the questions of his anxious father avoided. He could, for a season, enjoy the gambols of the children, and his sister could be with him without fear of meeting her father.

"Is Mr. Mordecai awake?" enquired the well-known voice of Marion, as she entered the room with her sewing over her arm.

"Awake, and feeling much better," he replied, extending his hand to her. "Will you not open the window, and exercise here upon that piece of handiwork, rather than return up stairs?"

"Certainly, if I will not disturb you."

"Where are the children?"

"In high glee in the nursery. It is the only place in which they are permitted to make what noise they please; being at a respectable distance, it disturbs neither sick nor well."

"I will leave you in charge of Marion, a little while, Lemuel," said Mrs. Nesbit, rising. "I want to give Hogan some commissions, as he is going to Varastone. Have you any messages to send?"

"Will you permit him to leave this letter with my sister, Mrs. Nesbit?"

"Certainly; he can do so without any trouble."

"I have a message also for Mrs. Houston, but that must be delivered in person. I want to warn her against Uncle Paul's invasion of Rideville cottage. He declares it is a paradise, and that he will not stir one foot homewards till father's return, even should he be obliged to invite himself to remain."

"It will only tempt them to desire Mr. Mordecai's stay prolonged," replied Marion; they enjoy his society exceedingly."

"And my stay here will be somewhat lengthened by my father's detention, Miss Marion. I, at least, do not regret the necessity."

"It gives no one any feeling but pleasure, Mr. Mordecai. My mother remarked she would feel a said void when you left us."

"I should be most happy to think Miss Nesbit would also cast a thought upon me, in my absence." Marion colored deeply, "And an interest in your prayers I desire, that I may be a branch of the true vine, and that I may draw water from the living fountain, that I again thirst not."

"Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden," replied Marion. "God never turns any empty away."

"But I am neither weary, nor heavy laden; I desire to offer thanksgiving and praise, to the Most High, for the restoration of my idolized sister, but when my lip is attuned to praise, my heart refuses to do its office, and the ear of the Almighty is not open to me."

"You are going in your own strength, Mr. Mordecai, as Jesus gives all the power, so He will have all the glory."

"I do not derogate any thing from His glory; I know

that He now sitteth on the right hand of the Majesty on high; that he is an Intercessor, but not mine; He does not lend a hearing ear to the voice of my supplication."

For a time, Marion was silent; her work lay before her untouched, her eyes were bent upon the floor.

Mr. Mordecai continued. "A day or two since, I felt myself on the threshold of eternity; the Almighty seemed to breathe upon my spirit, and I longed to be freed from this mortal clay. I have found a ransom, sounded distinctly in my ears, and my spirit rejoiced in God my Saviour. But I fear it was only a wrought imagination. Now, how changed; I would fain find some Messiah less inimical to my father, and for his sake my uncle's fearless avowal only distresses me."

"Your repentance needs to be repented of, Mr. Mordecai," replied Marion, her eyes filling with tears; "I fear you are still in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity?"

"Faithful are the wounds of a friend, Miss Nesbit, but would you advise me to seek the Saviour with my whole heart; confess him before men, as uncle is about doing, and leave my father a solitary being, seeking rest only in the grave?"

"I am not fitted to advise, I can see the difficulties in your path, but the grace of the Almighty is sufficient. He can make a way of escape for them all; I should think great caution would be indeed needed in your circumstances."

"No caution would avail; my father would drive me from his presence, at whatever expense of feeling. To one whom he considers an apostate, every avenue of his heart is closed."

Marion answered nothing, but taking a little bible from her pocket, and turning to the 22d chapter of Acts, she read the first twenty verses; then closing the book, she merely said, "Is God's hand shortened now, that it cannot act?"

"Would that I had your faith, Miss Nesbit, but I

am tremblingly awaiting the effect of my uncle's announcement on my father's mind."

Marion shook her head mournfully. The conversation was interrupted by the return of Mrs. Nesbit.

Rapidly, indeed, did the week pass by; daily did the children look forward with delight, to a ride in uncle Lemuel's sleigh, and at the close of the day, it might always be seen, bringing Mr. and Mrs. Ryers, to pass the evening at the house of Major Nesbit. Dr. Lodi kept his word, and remained a guest with Mr. Houston, though certainly, not without the most cordial invitation. His sleigh was also put in requisition, and during that week, the two families generally spent the evenings together. Years after, he would often revert to that period. "The conversations of those evenings were fraught with rich blessings to my soul; there I obtained knowledge to temper my zeal, and humility to curb an indomitable spirit."

The last evening had arrived; on the morrow, Dr. Lodi and Lemuel expected to return home, and this delightful intercourse would cease. At half after nine, as usual, the Bible was placed before Major Nesbit; not feeling well, he resigned his seat to Howard. The chapter was read, the hymn sung. Howard then asked, "Will you lead us in prayer, Dr. Lodi?" There was a pause of some moments; deep stillness reigned; he arose, and knelt; all followed his example. At the first sound of his voice Lemuel was completely overcome; as he proceeded, the deepest feeling of contrition that his stubborn will had not been subdued took possession of him; his heart was melted, and fervently did he unite in the heartfelt and earnest prayer of his uncle, that all obstacles should be removed, and all nations unite in worshipping the true Messiah, Jesus, the King of kings, and Lord of glory. His voice was at first low, but distinct and clear; his language choice and beautiful. Towards the close, he seemed lifted above himself, forgetful of the presence of any but the one whom he addressed. There was a depth of humility, yet such sublimity in his expressions, that all were affected

even to tears, and his amen was involuntarily responded by the whole party. Miriam arose to take leave.

"I will drive you home myself, Miriam," he said; "or rather Mr. Ryers shall drive us both; and I will say good-night to you, also, Mrs. Houston. I have some business in Varastone early; I will, therefore, remain all night at Mr. Ryers' boarding-house. I have engaged a room there, so that I can spend some time with Miriam at Varastone as well as with Lemuel at Rocklyn."

"Rich and varied are my blessings," said Mrs. Ryers; "and one of the greatest, the re union with my beloved uncle."

The guests departed; Major Nesbit and Howard, being fatigued, excused themselves, and retired to rest. Mrs. Nesbit passed through the house, to see that all was safe ere they retired for the night. Marion and Mr. Mordecai were left alone, as Cornelia had not yet returned from a visit to Miss Spencer.

"Dr. Lodi has already made great progress in his Christian walk," Marion remarked.

"There is much in natural temperament," he replied, "my uncle, ardent by nature, could not coldly engage in so important a matter; independent, and entirely fearless always, he would go forth and perform what he supposed his duty, though opposition met him at every step. Simple-hearted to the last degree, he would veil no feeling that took possession of his bosom."

"The Spirit of God breathing upon such a disposition," replied Marion; "will mellow every feeling, and fit him for much usefulness."

"I trust he will await our return to Rocklyn to inform my father of his apostacy, as he will, of course, consider it. My principal regret, in going to my home, is the want of kindred spirits in Rocklyn. Miss Marion, may I ask that you sometimes cast a thought upon me when absent?"

"Certainly, Mr. Mordecai, and my poor prayers shall daily be offered, that Divine light may be shed upon your soul."

"And may I hope, that at some future time I may

be accounted something more than friend, by Marion Nesbit?"

The eyes of Marion sought the floor, as she replied, "Your first earthly duty, Mr. Mordecai, is to your father. Let his happiness, and that alone, be your present care. Between us, friendship must be the only link."

The countenance of Mr. Mordecai saddened, "I know your spirit has but little sympathy with mine, in its present state. Such a boon I would not ask until I became a decided Christian."

"We will await that day, and leave the consideration of an earthly future."

"I feel that I was wrong and selfish, Marion, to ask you even to shed a ray of light upon my path. For myself, I here solemnly vow, that none other than the hand of Marion Nesbit will ever be sought by me, should that suit be unpropitious."

"Recall that vow, Mr. Mordecai; I dislike binding, or being bound by promise, but that the name of Lemuel Mordecai be enrolled among the followers of the Redeemer, is my humble, fervent, daily prayer, and will be until I see it answered."

"And when such a blessed time arrives, as I trust it may," he replied, "allow me, at least, a faint hope that our prayers and songs of praise may mingle together at one altar, and that my path may be gladdened by the prospect, however distant, of a union with Miss Nesbit. Shall it be so, Marion?" he added, rising from the sofa, and taking her hand.

It was not withdrawn, but Marion remained silent.

"May I accept your silence as acquiescence in my request?"

The head of Marion was slightly bowed. There was a warm pressure of her hand. He merely added, "Bless you, Marion," and quickly leaving the parlor, he proceeded to his own chamber.

## CHAPTER IX.

“The morning finds the self-sequestered man,  
Fresh for his task, intend what task he may.”

ALL was hurry and bustle, in the business streets of Varastone. The cars from a neighboring city were seen in the distance, rapidly advancing. Through loaded carts, drays, carriages, &c., and jostled by men, in by far too much haste, to make room for any, Dr. Lodi pressed his way, and stepped into the car the moment of its arrival. His eye took in at a glance every passenger. Not meeting the object of his search, he walked forward into the second car. He there found Mr. Mordecai, but so engrossed in conversation with Rabbi Leyden, that he was not aware he had arrived at the end of his journey. Dr. Lodi stood before them. His presence was not noticed.

“Your heart breaks in a good cause, Mr. Mordecai,” remarked the Rabbi, “and your reward is with you.”

“He who sitteth the solitary in families, designs that compact shall stand,” interrupted Dr. Lodi.

Mr. Mordecai started. Rabbi Leyden rose to his feet.

“Paul Lodi!” exclaimed his brother, seizing his extended hand. It was held warmly between those of Dr. Lodi, as he said, very gravely, turning to the Rabbi, “Blessed be that promise. When thy father and mother forsake thee, then the Lord will take thee up; our dear one has had this promise literally fulfilled. The great Shepherd, who giveth His life for the sheep, has called her into His own fold, He has made her to lie down in green pastures, He prepareth a table before her in the presence of her enemies.”

“She forsook her father,” replied the Rabbi; “has wandered from the path of righteousness, and has the

heaviest curses of the Almighty resting upon her, Paul Lodi; have you the temerity to impugn laws, transmitted orally, from generation to generation, and gathered now into our sacred Talmud."

The eye of Mr. Mordecai, was fixed anxiously upon his brother, but he remained silent.

Dr. Lodi, replied, "I neither did, nor ever will acknowledge any law but that laid down in Holy Writ; that teaches me, that if mine enemy hunger, I must feed him; if he thirst, I must give him drink."

Rabbi Leyden looked around, as though fearing to be overheard, but the cars were vacated, and they, entirely alone. "Your mind has been polluted with the horrible tenets of that vile imposture," he replied. "If you permit yourself to be still further imbued with its sentiments; if it be not at once relinquished, you know the fearful consequences."

The eye of Dr. Lodi, was fixed sternly upon him, but in his usual, calm manner, he replied, "Whether it be right in the sight of God, to obey man rather than God, judge ye. In the place of pointing your arrows, which are headless against those out of the pale of your own Church, Rabbi Leyden, go learn what that meaneth, 'I will have mercy and not sacrifice.'"

The Rabbi turned darkly upon him. "When God's chosen people entered the promised land," he enquired, "was mercy recommended to the inhabitants thereof? Were they not commanded to cut off, root and branch, until the foul stain of their existence would be no longer remembered? Who are now the enemies of the Lord? Those who desert his banners, and call down upon themselves the curses of the Hebrew Church. Miriam Mordecai has braved its indignations. Beware, lest a like fate befall the brother of her mother."

"The laws of God given to Moses on Sinai, I revere, and will ever act in accordance with them. The word, which our fathers have been guided to shield, through all their wanderings, has taught me the way, the truth and the life. That tells me, there shall be a day; and that period has now arrived, when the watchman upon

Mount Ephraim shall cry, 'Arise, ye, and let us go up to Zion, unto the Lord our God,' Jesus is the Captain of our salvation, let every knee bow before him."

"To your perversion of Scripture, I will not give ear," said the Rabbi, "nor longer endure your presence."

The head of Mr. Mordecai rested on his hand, as he remained on the corner of the seat. Bowed down with grief, he did not notice the Rabbi awaited his departure. Dr. Lodi threw himself carelessly beside him, resting his hand upon his shoulder, and leaning his head forward, rendered it impossible for Rabbi Leyden to approach him. With a dark look at Dr. Lodi, and repeating some words in Hebrew, he left the cars.

"The travelers are again assembling, Solomon," remarked his brother, "we had better return home."

"Home," he repeated bitterly, "Solomon Mordecai is bereft of all that constitutes a home."

Rising, without even a glance at Dr. Lodi, he walked, tremblingly, to the front of the car, and attempted to descend the steps.

"You are feeble, sir," remarked the conductor, "allow me to assist you to your carriage."

Taking his arm, he walked slowly on. Dr. Lodi refrained offering his assistance, lest it should be declined before the stranger. The coachman sprang from his seat as Mr. Mordecai advanced. Dr. Lodi came forward also, but he passed on, and speaking to the driver of a hack, immediately entered it, after thanking the conductor for his politeness.

"To what place shall I drive you, sir?" enquired the coachman, finding he was to receive no direction from the traveler.

"To Grangeville, to the house of Major Nesbit."

"I know it," replied the man, nodding familiarly, "I took a lady there, drived there regular for four weeks, every day, by her orders, and came home as empty as I went, till, at last, she got in, in a hurry, and drove post haste to Varastone. If it hadn't been at Major Nesbit's, there'd been hard thoughts, aye, and hard

words about it too, I reckon. But I never heerd nothin further, only Mr. Fitch had a mighty time to git his bill for her foolish fancies."

"Is the bill settled?" enquired Mr. Mordecai, in a low, husky tone.

"Wasn't till tother day. Mr. Fitch says her husband paid up like a man when he found he couldn't help it."

The loquacity of the driver was arrested by the arrival of the carriage at Major Nesbit's.

"Shall I drive up the lawn, sir? The lady always made me stand outside."

"Of course, drive to the door, sirrah," he replied, sharply, "and reserve your communications for those who desire to hear them."

The man, alarmed at the tone of Mr. Mordecai, made no further remarks, but touching his horses with the whip, turned them into the gate, and almost immediately stopped before the door. The driver on receiving his fare, humbly touched his hat, mounted his box, and departed.

"Hast thou indeed, so fallen, child of my pride?" he murmured, as he placed his hand upon the bell.

The door was quickly opened by Houston; Lemuel met him in the hall. Both entered the library; and the little boy, with instinctive delicacy, retired. "May heaven bless my boy," he said, affectionately, laying his hand upon his knee, as Lemuel seated himself closely beside him. "Were it not for you, Ulie, I should be as a scathed oak, bereft of all its branches. Oh! that the head of Paul Lodi had been pillow'd in the grave, ere we should have been called to separate. It is sundering a tie far dearer than life. Can it be that that loved footstep shall never again be heard within my dwelling. Would that I had been gathered to my fathers, ere this blow had crushed my hopes, my happiness—yea, almost my very life." The old man wept; long and bitterly did he weep.

Lemuel said nothing, but sat gazing upon him, as with convulsive throes his whole frame shook with

agony. At length, nature seemed relieved, and he became more composed.

"We will retire to my chamber, father," said Lemuel, rising, and gently placing his arm within his; "there is a private stairway by which we can obtain access to it. You can there be freed from observation; compose yourself, and be better fitted to receive the family."

"I fear they will think me devoid of all politeness, in not at once seeking them out."

"We will waive etiquette for the present, father," he replied, as he led the way to his own room.

"I feel much better, now, my son," he said, after bathing his face freely in cold water, and taking a glass of wine. "Your wine and water have much refreshed me. We must be preparing for home now, Ulie; I have sent directions to Mrs. Josephs to have dinner ready by three. Do you feel equal to the effort, my son?"

"Entirely so, father," he replied, tenderly placing his arm around him, as they descended to the parlor. "I trust many, many happy days are in store for us at our home in Rocklyn."

"You are my staff, indeed, Ulie; my stronghold on life, which nothing can overturn but—"

"But what, father?"

"Nothing, my boy; it was only a dark thought—a suggestion of the Evil One—something impossible to happen."

Lemuel made no reply; but the arm which supported his father trembled.

"Have you remunerated the servants for their kind services, Lemuel?" enquired his father, as if suddenly recollecting.

"I have this grave matter in train, father," he said, with an amused face. "They will not receive money; but as Hogan and Susan, the cook, are soon to have a wedding, and I am to be an honored guest, I have given him an order on Mr. Thomas for a suit of broad-cloths, and have asked leave to provide the entertain-

ment for the evening—ice-cream, cakes, &c. To Jane, the chambermaid, and bridesmaid also, I have presented a dress, proper for the occasion, the selection of which is left to the choice of Miss Cornelia, as Miss Marion declines, on the plea of being about as well versed in such matters as myself."

Mr. Mordecai smiled; but it was evident his thoughts had wandered far away before Lemuel had finished his recital. A kind welcome was given Mr. Mordecai by Mrs. Nesbit, and a pressing invitation to remain the day; but he politely declined, pleading his long absence from home, and Lemuel, taking a kind leave of every member of the family, and reminding Mrs. Nesbit of the promised visit of the children, the sleigh being ready, set out, with his father, for Rocklyn.

There was a feeling of home as Lemuel entered the hall, and met the pleasant greeting of Mrs. Josephs. He had pictured to himself the sombre walls and furniture so highly, that he was surprised at their cheerful aspect. Dinner was soon ready, and, with a thankful heart, Lemuel sat down with his father to partake of it. By pleasant conversation, he endeavored to divert his mind, and in a measure succeeded in soothing his troubled spirit.

"If the gentlemen would be pleased to take a look at my hot-house," said the gardener, doffing his cap at the dining-room door, as they arose from the table; "my plants never thraved betther, I'm a ~~thinkin'~~ thinkin'."

To the surprise of Mr. Mordecai, Lemuel joined the man, and entered the garden with him. Where are all Lemuel's painful associations, he thought, in connection with his sister. Forgotten her, he surely has not. A vague suspicion arose in his mind, but was at once dismissed.

Lemuel, unconscious that his father observed him, carefully examined every plant. "How soon will your grapes be ripe, Sampson?" he enquired.

"In about two weeks, sir."

"Let a small basket of them be placed daily upon

my book-case. I need them for a friend. As each fruit ripens, let me have some of them also."

The order was obeyed to the letter, and little Lemuel and Rebecca pronounced Uncle Lemuel's fruit better than any they ever tasted before. The table of Major Nesbit, and Mr. Houston were plentifully supplied by old Mr. Mordecai. Seldom a week passed, but a visit was made to both houses, and Sampson was always directed to prepare a basket with a variety of fruits and flowers, and place them in the sleigh with him. Whether the vehicle of Lemuel was seen almost daily at the door of Major Nesbit, or whether Miss Marion was sometimes induced to accompany him to Varastone to visit Mrs. Ryers, and perhaps pass the day with her, is not for us to enquire.

But to return. Lemuel, after eulogizing the beauty of the green-house, and the decided taste of Sampson, even beyond his expectation, returned to his father. The day passed rapidly. Many pleasant anecdotes were related by Mr. Mordecai, of things coming under his notice, while travelling in the Eastern States, during his son's illness, and evening came upon them long before they had anticipated. A light repast of biscuit and tea was served on a silver salver, after which, Mr. Mordecai, much fatigued, retired for the night. Lemuel had a feeling of relief when left alone, and throwing himself on the sofa, endeavored to recall all that had occurred in the last few eventful weeks. But a short time elapsed, when the hall door opened, and the well-known step of his uncle met his ear. He entered the parlor. "I thought to find you here, Ulie," he said; "I knew it would be vain to seek a reconciliation with your father, in his present state of feeling. I, therefore, did not come in, until I observed a light in his chamber window, and knew he had retired."

"Will there ever be other than the present state of feeling, uncle?" observed Mr. Mordecai, sadly.

"I fear, we look too much to human means, Lemuel; Miriam confessed to-day that her faith always fails,

when praying for her father: at that time her mind would always revert to his conscientious adherence to the Jewish faith, his deeply-rooted and blinded prejudice against the Christian religion. Has he named my name, Lemuel?"

"With the most poignant anguish, uncle; but I fear all intercourse is at an end."

"That cannot and shall not be; I will see him alone, and reason the point calmly with him."

Mr. Mordecai shook his head doubtfully. "Remember Miriam, uncle; that separation has made life a blank; yet has he ever relented for a moment?"

"At least I shall see you daily, Lemuel; I have taken rooms in the house of an old Scotch lady, Mrs. Douglas. She has a small family, and can accommodate one boarder comfortably. She has given me a parlor and chamber for myself, and an extra room, adjoining mine, for a friend, if required. To-morrow, you must see them; I want your opinion of my new abode. But, you are now fatigued, Ulie, good-night, my son; say nothing of my visit, it would only be prohibited. Let us endeavor to pray in faith, that his heart, like ours, may be opened to the truth as it is in Jesus."

Dr. Lodi took leave, and Lemuel, worn out with fatigue, retired to rest, and slept soundly until the morning light. On awaking, his scattered thoughts were soon recalled by a glance at the princely apartment; appearing more magnificent from the strong contrast it presented to the chamber he had recently occupied. Was there a feeling of elation within his bosom as he touched the bell, and a man servant stood before him, awaiting, with the utmost deference, his young master's will? Not a rising of pride clouded his mind; but on bended knee, he resigned himself body, soul, and spirit, to his Saviour; and arose, feeling a peace, a hope, a love, a joy, which he had never before experienced, and which he longed to impart to his beloved father, but knew it to be impossible.

"You seem much better, Ulie," said his father, as

he bade him good-morning; "your step is far more vigorous than yesterday."

"I slept well last night, father; there is something in the feeling of home, after all."

Mr. Mordecai's countenance brightened. "And I slept soundly also, Ulie, after offering a thanksgiving that my son still retained his fealty and remained to smooth my thorny path, and strew flowers by the way."

"Is not our path hedged up at times, father, to lead us to higher aspirations?"

"Truly, my son; the stately steppings of the Almighty may be often seen in his dealings with the children of men; but when his people forsake his law, it is the power of the Evil One, and not an instrument for good to any. He often selects the most tender plant to wither with his scorching breath; and his quiver, filled with the poisonous arrows of temptation, are hurled at every heart. I confess I have sometimes felt their power, but have cast them from me, and have resisted, yea, and will resist them, even to the death. Our law sends out its warning voice, and the thunder of the Rabbins against the fallen, are calculated to deter any from the step. A true son of Abraham would write himself childless ere he would take an apostate to his bosom."

"Does not our law breathe a spirit of unforgiveness, father, at variance with all the dealings of the Lord God, merciful and gracious?"

"Did you make the Scriptures the man of your counsel, Lemuel," he replied sternly, "that question would have remained unasked."

The servant, appearing at the door to announce breakfast, the conversation was interrupted, and they proceeded to the breakfast-room.

"Do you intend riding this morning, my son?" enquired Mr. Mordecai.

"Yes, father; will you accompany me?"

"I have papers to arrange, that will detain me in my library all the morning. Be careful of your strength, Ulie. Do you go to Major Nesbits?"

"That is my expectation. I thought I would bring the children home with me."

"Do so. Mrs. Josephs will take good care of them, and their prattle will enliven us."

At the window of a large, grey stone house, some distance from the road side, on the brow of a hill, Dr. Lodi was standing, watching the sleigh of Mr. Mordcaï, as through the softened snow, he was endeavoring to make his way.

"Your carriage, would have stood you in better part, to-day, Ulie," said his uncle, as he advanced to meet him. The horse was soon fastened to the post of the piazza, and they entered the house together.

"Is this to be your parlor, uncle?" he enquired.

"It is; and the two upper rooms my chambers."

"In the summer, it will be charming. I can imagine you seated on this broad piazza, enjoying the delightful scenery around."

"And scenery within, also. James and Miriam have promised me every Sabbath. On Saturday, they will come up on the railroad, which will soon be completed, and return on Monday morning. The gambols of the children and the conversation of the parents, will add much to the beauty of my prospect."

"That is a happiness I never contemplated. I will endeavor to spend the Sabbath evening with you. The Rabbi, is always with father, who is perfectly infatuated with him, and I shall certainly avoid his society. But, in three months, uncle, when you sail for Europe, it must all cease."

"Let us enjoy the present, Ulie. Now, come up stairs, I want to show you all my comforts; hot, cold and shower baths between my rooms, and closets large enough to contain all the homespun linen of a sworn house wife. I took tea with Mrs. Douglas, last evening, her table is perfectly neat; the cloth of dazzling whiteness, and her kind, pleasant manner, produces a home feeling at once. Of course, it is far different from the style of living your father still retains; so much form seems scarcely consistent with his seclusion."

"Habit is second nature, you know, uncle. He has been accustomed to it since a child, and luxuries have become necessities to him."

"Fifteen minutes of eleven," exclaimed Dr. Lodi, looking at his watch with surprise; almost my lecture hour. My time-piece only could convince me an hour had passed since you came in. Please, my dear boy, in future, make yourself less agreeable, or the days will be quite too short for me."

"Well, uncle," replied Mr. Mordecai, laughing, detaching his horse from the post at the same time, "in future I will endeavor to be a less interested listener, as therein lay the secret of my agreeable qualities this morning."

Shaking Dr. Lodi's hand cordially, he returned home, feeling his strength not equal to any further effort, and was glad to resume his place on the sofa with a pleasant book for his companion. At length, wearied with reading, he laid his book aside, and soon his thoughts, permitted to pursue their own course, without a rein, wandered into oblivion; he knew not where; he slept. At length the sound of voices met his ear from an adjoining apartment, and rousing from his light slumber, he plainly distinguished that of Dr. Lodi. He spoke in his own clear, calm, decided tone, but there was a sad cadence that touched the heart of Lemuel. His advances had been sternly repulsed. The tone spoke it as plainly as though the words had reached his ear, and with a mind filled with gloomy forebodings, he turned restlessly upon his pillow. At length the library door opened, and he heard the words, "You will learn perhaps when too late, brother, that you have blinded your eyes and hardened your heart against the truth, as it is in Jesus." The door closed, and Dr. Lodi passed slowly through the hall. Lemuel arose to meet him, but without glancing toward him he disappeared. His flushed face spoke some indignation, as well as sorrow, and the sound of the door, as it closed upon him, seemed in the ear of Lemuel to say, I can never again enter it.

"Can this state of things continue?" murmured Lemuel, much excited. "Can friend after friend be removed? Will the conviction of such a mind be disregarded?"

Throwing himself into a chair, for a long time he remained in deep thought. Was he living in a dream? Had strange vagaries taken possession of his imagination? Or had the doors indeed been closed against those who formed the whole of life within its walls? Were they living almost in regal splendor, while Miriam was not permitted to partake even of the crumbs? To what am I submitting, he thought, as he arose and paced the floor hurriedly. Called to sit at the feet of Jesus, yet fearful to proclaim his love to lost souls. And Marion Nesbit, so fitted to remove the thorns with which my path is strewn. It cannot, must not be, he murmured. "Ulie," said a voice close beside him. He started, and looked towards the spot from whence the sound proceeded. Pale and trembling, his father stood before him, his hands clasped and a countenance on which despair had set its seal. With a low moan, he sank upon a chair. In an instant all thought of self was lost, and his whole interest centered in his afflicted parent. Placing his arm around him, he led him to a sofa, and gently laying him upon it, placed himself beside him. "Ulie, my boy," he said, but his voice refused him utterance, and the quivering lip and icy coldness of his whole frame alarmed his son. Not wishing to call assistance, he, after thoroughly warming his cloak, wrapped it carefully around him. Some slight warmth was at length imparted, and the old gentleman became more composed. "Ulie," he repeated in a very feeble tone. The ear of Mr. Mordecai bent low to listen.

"Satan goeth to and fro, through the earth, often appearing as an angel of light. Resist his subtleties, my son, my darling son, for upon the ruin of my family he seems intent. You are young, and inexperienced. Be wary. I have, and will resist him, until

time shall be no longer with me, and his power at an end."

"Why not face the danger, father, and in the strength of the Lord, go forth to meet him?"

Mr. Mordecai shook his head. "Few escape, Ulie, from such a conflict. Let your uncle's fall stand as a beacon, to warn those who desire to meddle with unseen things. The fate of Uzziah was sealed, when his hand touched the Ark of God. To attempt to lift the veil were a far greater crime in the sight of the Almighty. In due time, our own Messiah will manifest himself to us."

Lemuel was about replying, but the anxious eye of his father rested upon him, and refraining speaking, he changed the topic of conversation; and Mr. Mordecai, beguiled with his pleasant stories, became quite tranquil, and even cheerful.

The following Saturday brought Mr. and Mrs. Ryers, with the children, to the new abode of Dr. Lodi. In the evening, Lemuel joined them.

"To-morrow," said Dr. Lodi, "I desire to devote myself openly to the service of the Lord, in our little village church. It is their communion season. I am to receive baptism before the services. I intended joining the Grangeville church, but find I can be more useful here."

"I will rejoice to sit with you at the table of the Lord," said Miriam.

"And I," said Lemuel, with a most melancholy smile, "must only in spirit be with you. As to-morrow, you know, is a high day, kept for the dedication of the second temple, I must accompany my father to the synagogue."

"Your way is sadly hedged up, brother, but the rainbow of hope is before us; let us cling to all the promises."

"With your assistance, James," said Dr. Lodi, "I look forward to forming a bible class for the students, on Sunday evening. This room will accommodate

quite a number. You can then be with us, Lemuel; can you not?"

"That will indeed be manna to a hungry soul, now feeding upon husks," he replied.

"Let us run with patience the race set before us, Lemuel," said his uncle; "we shall soon reach our father's home—soon walk the streets of the New Jerusalem; there, every tear shall be wiped away, and the Lamb which is in the midst of the Throne, shall lead us unto living fountains of waters. I long for that heavenly home, where, 'I can bathe my weary soul, in seas of heavenly rest.'"

"Speak not so, uncle," said Miriam; "we could not say, amen, to such a wish. The sea voyage, I trust, will renovate you entirely, and you will be spared us many days."

Dr. Lodi shook his head. "That hope, I must abandon, Miriam; my stocks have fallen—probably, never to rise, and my means, consequently, reduced almost to nothing. This will oblige me to continue in the college. But I can leave the future, without a care. Jesus has gone to prepare a mansion, and will return to receive me to himself."

The eye of Dr. Lodi kindled, as he continued speaking of the dying love of his dear Redeemer, but as Miriam laid her head that night upon the pillow, there was a sad foreboding, that the bond between herself and uncle was to be again severed, not to be united until her spirit took its flight also, to mansions of rest. His growth in grace had been so rapid, he seemed matured for a better home.

Weeks passed on; each Saturday bringing the guests to Rocklyn, and each Sabbath evening devoted to twenty students, who gladly availed themselves of this opportunity of making themselves better acquainted with the bible. The fears of Miriam for her uncle's health were quite allayed; he seemed bright, and vigorous at times, even joyous; but she was not aware of the terrible conflict in his bosom, or the mental

agony he endured, in consequence of the separation from Mr. Mordecai, and anxiety for his soul's salvation. Hour after hour was spent in prayer, for his conversion; but each day brought some account of his increased abhorrence to the Christian religion, shutting every avenue to his heart against his dearest friends, speaking of them only as foes, and vile renegades.

"Lemuel, my only child," he remarked one day, "I blush I ever had a Miriam, and would gladly curse the day on which my heart was gladdened by the tidings of her birth; and Paul Lodi, once my more than brother, now—"

"Father," interrupted Lemuel, rising, and laying his hand upon his shoulder, "will you goad him whom you profess to love, to madness? and will you pour out your anathemas on her, who only followed in the footsteps of the one who gave her being? My mother died a Christian."

Mr. Mordecai sprang from his seat. "Your informant was basely false, Lemuel Mordecai; she died in the presence of the Rabbi, and never, by a word, did he give me to understand, that she for a moment swerved from the religion of her fathers. Your uncle misunderstood some words as conveying heretical sentiments, uttered only in the ravings of delirium. What is your ground for such an assertion?"

"This paper," replied Lemuel, taking a small envelope from his bosom, "is her own dying asseveration, and handed to uncle Paul, just before her spirit departed." The eye of Mr. Mordecai rested upon it, as Lemuel read, "I die in the faith of my Redeemer, trusting alone in his atoning blood for my salvation. May our children be clothed with his righteousness, and their robes made white in the blood of the Lamb."

The paper was scarcely read ere it was torn into fragments, and dashed upon the floor. "It is a falsehood black as midnight,—a foul imposture invented by the Evil One, to wrench from me my last hold on life."

At this moment Abraham entered, but seeing the

wild and haggard look of Mr. Mordecai, hesitated delivering his message. Lemuel looked towards him enquiringly. "Professor Thornton sent one of the students to say, sir, that while Dr. Lodi was lecturing, he ruptured a blood-vessel, and is now lying very ill at his own house. He wishes to see Mr. Lemuel Mordecai at once, and the gentleman desires to know where Mrs. Ryers is to be found, as no time is to be lost."

"Her number is 49 Graystone street, Varastone, at the house of Mrs. Morgan," Lemuel replied, seizing his hat, and going rapidly out, without even glancing a look at his father.

"Call Mr. Lemuel back," he shouted to the servant. "I desire to speak with him." It was in vain. Before the servant could reach the door, he was far out of sight.

"Oh! for one word of warning in his ear," he murmured, as he seated himself, almost lifeless, in the nearest chair; "but he needs it not; firm in the faith, he will pass unscathed. My fears shall never obtain utterance; they might excite doubts in his now unclouded mind. But Paul Lodi sick! ill! perhaps dying!" The head of the old man sank lower and lower. "Paul Lodi! my friend for thirty years,—my counsellor, my brother,—my comforter in every trial." The head rested upon his knees; tears fell like rain-drops upon the floor. Long, long did he weep unrestrainedly; he was alone—alone with his former feelings,—alone with his early associations. All his kindly nature revived. "Was Paul Lodi indeed dying? Was it not possible to obtain forgiveness for his harshness at their last meeting?" He arose—he hesitated. The door opened—Abraham entered: "There is a messenger from Dr. Lodi, sir, begging that Mr. Mordecai will see him immediately. It is his dying request that he may be permitted to say farewell."

There was no longer hesitancy; Mr. Mordecai walked rapidly towards the front door.

"Your hat, sir," said the man, taking it from the stand, and with a low bow, handing it to him, "and the

carriage is in waiting; David thought it might be needed, and prepared it some time since."

"Drive quickly, David,—speedily," he said, as he seated himself; "more rapidly still. You are at a snail's pace, surely. I shall be too late,—too late for—" he said no more, but the coachman, obeying his direction, the attention of every passer-by was attracted by their lightning speed, and in just seven minutes, they stood before the door of Mrs. Douglas. Howard Nesbit came forward to assist him from the carriage. Not a word was spoken, but the sad countenances of Major and Mrs. Nesbit told him all hope was vain. The arm of Howard was again offered, and they proceeded to the chamber. A female form might have been seen passing into the next room as they entered. It was unnoticed by Mr. Mordecai. Mr. Ryers was seated at a distance, his head resting on his hand. He was unobserved also. With a faltering step, he advanced to the bedside. The head of Dr. Lodi was resting upon two pillows, which were thrown across the arm of Lemuel, who was seated at the head of the bed. A gleam of pleasure lighted his pale face as he saw his brother approach; he extended his hand towards him. Mr. Mordecai pressed it within his. The eye of Dr. Lodi turned anxiously upon him, as though he desired to address him, but the effort he made was succeeded by a long fit of coughing, and loss of breath. When he became composed, Mr. Mordecai, bending over him, said, in a low tone: "I crave your forgiveness, brother. If I have obtained it,—if there is no feeling but kindness toward me, raise your hand, or give me some token by which I may know there is nought but peace between us." The hand was lifted immediately. With great difficulty, and between intervals of coughing, he said "Oh! that you could experience, brother, the joy, the hope, the blessed peace that reigns within. A glorious world is almost unveiled before me. The seraph's harps attuned to praise, and praise alone, sound in mine ear. Fain would my spirit wing its flight to those blest scenes."

The face of Mr. Mordecai was hidden, and a low sob was the only reply.

The effort was great, he gasped for breath, but recovering, he continued, in the same low tone: "Solomon, my beloved brother, this peace, which passeth all understanding, is at your offer; my Beloved is mine; He may be thine. Jesus, the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, which is, and which was, and which is to come—the Almighty. Jesus is mine, and I am his. Blessed, ever blessed, thrice blessed, be—his—" the word died upon his lips; life had departed, and his spirit, freed from its clay tenement, had joined in praises for redeeming love. Mr. Mordecai attempted to rise, but fell fainting upon the floor. Lemuel sprang from the bedside, and, with the assistance of Howard and Major Nesbit, conveyed him to the room below. Restoratives were long applied, ere there was any sign of returning life. At length, he slowly opened his eyes, and fixing them upon Lemuel, he said, "Is all a stern reality, my son?" Lemuel bowed affirmatively. A deep shade crossed his brow, but there was no remark made on the scene he had just witnessed, nor was the slightest allusion ever made to it; but from that hour, a smile upon the face of Mr. Mordecai was seldom seen, and the deep furrows on his cheek told the ravages, not of time, but of sorrow, deep and heartfelt.

By his own request, the body of Dr. Lodi was laid beside his sister, much against the will of Rabbi Leyden; but as the family vault was placed in a lay burial-ground, his opposition was unavailing. Sore was the lamentation that a great man had indeed fallen in Israel. Scarcely a student but followed him to his last resting-place, and there was scarcely a dry eye when a funeral discourse was delivered by President Wilder, to an attentive and crowded audience. A great man had indeed fallen, and even in his short Christian career, he had been enabled to scatter seed that might spring up unto everlasting life; and through his in-

strumentality, by the blessing of God, *many jewels might be added to the crown of his Redeemer.*

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## CHAPTER X.

“I left the happy fields that smile,  
Around the village of content,  
And sought with wayward feet  
The torrid desert of ambition.”

DURING the protracted sickness of Mr. Mordecai, the house of Mr. Spencer had become the principal resort of Radcliff. Not only, was he a favored guest at Mrs. Spencer's receptions, but a cordial invitation was also given him to their private box at the opera; a privilege, of which twice a week, he availed himself. Many, were the envious remarks of old friends; and many the scornful glances, as they were recognized only by a cold and distant bow; but Radcliff, was intent only on one object, being considered a man of rank and fashion, and he could scarcely afford to notice those of whom Philip Spencer spoke contemptuously, and who were unknown to other members of that family. His business bore heavily upon him; it was indeed, a weight of care, and his employer, most unreasonable, not allowing him the slightest recreation, and, even hinting that a change would be necessary, unless he were more attentive. Still, he was seen as the intimate friend of Miss Spencer, who always received him in the most cordial manner; and, although her seat at the opera was always between her parents, his station was immediately behind her, and his arm generally accepted to lead her to the carriage. He was not a suitor; no, nor ever considered as such; her manner to him was without reserve, and she constantly alluded to her gratitude to his family as the deliverer of her father; but, he could not help observing, that he, nor any other

gentleman was ever given an opportunity for a moment's private conversation. It is somewhat strange, thought Radcliff, yet may be entirely unintentional; as for myself, I should never dare aspire; yet none are more intimate, more esteemed; what, if I should find some encouragement to hope, to hope what? and his heart beat high with exultation; to be the husband of that angelic being, the son-in-law of Mr. Spencer; a full partner in the firm; occupying a house in Grosvenor Square, impossible! I'm dreaming. No! not impossible, I will put forth every effort to accomplish it, and open the eyes of my unaccommodating employer to his mistake in treating me with so little lenity. Many were the dreamy palaces reared by Radcliff, and many were the calls at the house of Mr. Spencer, and many were the fruitless efforts to obtain one moment's private conversation with Miss Spencer; surrounded as she was with gay admirers; but a bright smile was always given him, and her kind, "I am most happy to see you, Mr. Nesbit," was always interpreted favorably, and Radcliff determined to press his suit the first opportunity. Months sped away, and found Radcliff just in the same position. Cornelia and Miss Spencer had become bosom friends, but the visits of the latter were short, and always in the morning, when he was at Varastone. Some more definite step must be taken, thought Radcliff, as he slowly and reluctantly was wending his way towards the counting house. I will ask an hour's grace of Mr. Major, this morning, and see Mrs. Spencer upon this subject. The cold manner in which Mr. Major returned his, "Good morning, sir," was rather chilling; he, nevertheless determined to get leave of absence, if possible.

"A little pressing business will call me away for a short time this morning, Mr. Major," he remarked, "will my services be required between the hours of twelve and one?"

"Your services will no longer be required here, Mr. Nesbit, I have engaged an accountant, who will fill the

situation more faithfully. You will receive a cheque from Mr. Baker for the three months due you."

Radcliff bowed haughtily, and going to the desk of the head clerk, received the money, coldly bade Mr. Major, "good morning," and left the counting room.

Flushed, and excited, he immediately proceeded to Mr. Spencer's. Asking to see Mrs. Spencer alone, he was shown into the library, where she was sitting reading. "I am an early visitor, this morning," he said, trying to assume a pleasant air; "I hope I am not intruding."

"Mr. Nesbit could not possibly be placed in that position, in this house; a more welcome guest never enters it."

"By all its members, am I thus esteemed?" he asked, coloring deeply.

"Certainly, without any exception," was the reply,

The eye of Radcliff sparkled with delight—Mrs. Spencer evidently wishes a denouement, he thought; my suit will be propitious. I am safe; Miss Spencer is mine—"Is Miss Spencer at home, to-day?" he at length ventured to enquire.

"She is," she replied, "but I must ask you to excuse her this morning; she has been somewhat excited by the unexpected arrival of Dr. Ruthven. She scarcely looked for him until next week."

"Dr. Ruthven. Is he a relative?"

"Not yet," she replied, laughing, "but the following month will, I trust, give him the right to call me mother. Dr. Ruthven's absence, the last year, has enabled Kate to keep the engagement quiet; it is an attachment of long standing, but we refused our consent, until she had attained the mature age of eighteen. A ring was then placed upon her finger, and none can say, in her gayest moments, that she has ever trifled with the affections of any. You may have observed the house next door undergoing reparation; the gardens are to be thrown into one, and on the 20th of May, she expects to take possession just one month from to day. In every way it meets our view. He is

one of the most affectionate sons, and brothers, and as frank as he is kind. The two families have always been on the most intimate terms; I have known him from a child. He is five years Kate's senior."

"Is he wealthy?" at length stammered Radcliff, feeling it necessary to say something.

"Not at all, with the exception of his profession, he has nothing; and Kate marries him with the full understanding that he will retire from the navy. His talents will soon enable him to get into practice here. I must introduce you."

"I should be most happy to cultivate an acquaintance with him," returned Radcliff, rising quickly, as if fearful of the entrance of the rival.

"Let us see you very soon, Mr. Nesbit, but how pale you are looking, this morning. Are you not well?"

"Perfectly, but a little occurrence at the counting-room, some unreasonableness on the part of Mr. Major, that is all. I shall soon recover my equanimity. Please present my respects to Miss Spencer; I shall soon do myself the pleasure of waiting upon Mr.—Dr. Ruthven." With an air of gayety, foreign to his feeling, he left the house. Walking rapidly along, scarcely knowing whither he was going, his attention was suddenly arrested, by a call of—"Stop, Nesbit." At the same moment a gentleman sprang from a small vehicle, and stood before him.

"A fortunate meeting, Nesbit. I judge from your parading the streets, at this time of day, you are a man of leisure. Will you take a ride with me, out of town? it is a delightful morning, and I am going to make a visit to my bachelor friend, Mr. Maurisse, six miles from the city."

"Thank you, Mr. Laurette, I will gladly accept your offer; a little fresh air will be grateful, after days spent in the dusty city. I leave home early, and return late, therefore cannot enjoy our country home."

"Fresh country air is well for a season, but life, such as is consistent with my nature, cannot be enjoyed in

country associations, but with your means, I would not be bound down to hours."

Radcliffe colored.

"But tell me, Nesbit, they say your brother will gain great éclat by this Spencer law suit. Is it so?"

"If he be not disappointed, he probably will."

"Disappointed. There is little fear of the result. Several gentlemen have told me he surpasses any they have ever heard, in sound reasoning. He also excels in oratory, and rivets the attention of his auditors."

Radcliff smiled bitterly. "His path is not beset with thorns," he thought, but not a word escaped him.

"Nesbit, you are not like yourself, man. What has happened? Some refusal from one of the fair sex?"

"Not at all," he replied, trying to rally; "I was not conscious of any difference."

"Difference! Why, you are as dull as a door-nail; very unlike Radcliff Nesbit. Do please rouse up, and play the agreeable when we arrive at our destination."

A few moments brought them to the house; it was a fine old fashioned building, of freestone, with an extensive lawn in front, completely shaded with elm trees, forming almost a grove around the mansion. Everything bore marks of ancient splendor; the headless statuary, a porter's lodge in ruins, remains of fountains that once watered many acres around, and barns, decorated with party-colored cupolas, spoke the taste and wealth of a former owner. They were courteously received by Mr. Maurisse, who took them into a large parlor, where a number of gentlemen, some of them evidently entire strangers to him, were assembled. The name of Mr. Maurisse was familiar to Radcliff, as a gentleman of family and fashion; farther, he knew him not, but the community did not make golden report of him; there was a whisper of misdeeds, but none spoke openly, neither was he debarred society. His bearing was that of a gentleman, but there was a freedom of manner, from which Radcliff shrank. A fine-looking woman, splendidly attired, seemed to have the direction; who she was, he was not informed, but her talent, as a house-

keeper, none could doubt, who partook of the delightful repast placed before them. The noisy mirth, amounting almost to vulgarity, shocked Radcliff, and he remained only a silent observer.

"Well, Granby, what's the news?" enquired Mr. Maurisse, of a gentleman just arrived. "You generally are furnished in that line."

"The most important to me is the engagement of Miss Spencer," was the reply.

"Miss Spencer!" exclaimed several voices at once; "to whom?"

"To Harry Ruthven."

"Harry Ruthven! that effeminate fellow?" remarked Mr. Steele.

"I challenge you to make that charge good, Frank; a nobler spirit never breathed."

"Noble! Why he is in perfect leading strings. About a year since, I asked him why he did not frequent the opera? His reply was this, 'I should like sometimes to see a play, but my mother and sisters entirely disapprove of it, and I should be sorry to take any step contrary to their wishes.'"

"Well! and how does a desire for their approbation turn him into a woman?"

"Certainly, being under petticoat government is one step towards it. Then, on Sunday, I suppose he has not their sanction to raise his eyes; for, regularly, you may see him, twice a day, with a relative hanging on each arm, with his head bowed, as though in the most earnest conversation, proceeding to some place of worship."

"Allow me to disabuse your mind on that subject, Mr. Steele," replied a fine-looking young gentleman, who had taken no part in the conversation previously, "Dr. Ruthven is my most intimate friend, and, so far from being blindly led by any, he has a powerful mind that will always govern. His education has been of the first order, and his powers of conversation unsurpassed; his devotion to his family only serves to render him more attractive. But, Mr. Maurisse," he added, rising, and looking at his watch, "you will ex-

curse my leaving you before the cloth is removed. It is now six o'clock, and my mother made an engagement for me at that hour, and requested me to keep her appointment.

"I regret the necessity, Mr. Maxwell," replied Mr. Maurisse, rising also, "I feared you were unwell, as you did not participate, either in our repast, or conversation."

"Where wine flows freely, sir, I am always out of my element. You return with me, Charles?" he continued, turning to a gentleman on the opposite side of the table. "We came together." His friend hesitated. The circle were clamorous he should remain. "I will not return alone," he said, fixing his eye intently on his friend. It was understood, and both gentlemen taking a courteous leave, jumped into a beautiful barouche, and soon disappeared, much to the chagrin of all the elder members of the party.

"Who are those gentlemen?" asked Radcliff.

"They do not belong to us," was the answer. "They are Southerners, gentlemen of large fortunes, and have just returned from making the tour of Europe."

The brow of Mr. Maurisse remained clouded for some time after their departure, notwithstanding his effort to appear gay. Conversation flagged, and Mr. Laurette proposed whist, to while away a tedious hour. To this the whole party cheerfully acceded, and Radcliff's thoughts were soon centred in a game, of which he was exceedingly fond.

"Do you not think," asked Mr. Steele, "that it gives the game double interest to stake some unimportant sum? Say five dollars. Shall we have it so, Mr. Maurisse?"

"As you think proper, gentlemen. Whatever would conduce to your pleasure, would also gratify me."

Some of the young gentlemen looked dissatisfied.

"I second the motion with all my heart," remarked Mr. Laurette.

"And I object with all mine," returned one of the

young strangers, rising, "but do not let me interfere with your arrangements."

"Allow me to say, Mr. Wilder, that you are somewhat inconsistent. Only last summer I saw you, at the shore, enter heart and soul into a raffle, made by the ladies of the house; not for money, to be sure, but the principle was precisely the same."

"I know it Mr. Laurette, and have since seen that those raffles had a most demoralizing effect, and do not intend lending them my countenance hereafter."

Mr. Laurette colored; something very much like anger passed over his face, but he repressed it, only saying, rather sneeringly, "Take care, Mr. Wilder, you do not strain at a gnat and swallow a camel."

Mr. Wilder only answered, "Gambling is gambling, sir, let it assume what phase it may; and raffling has made as many gamblers as five dollar stakes."

"Will you play, Mr. Nesbit?" asked Mr. Laurette, without seeming to notice the remark of Mr. Wilder, "a few dollars from your purse will not be missed."

Radcliff bowed assent, and placing his money upon the table, was soon entirely absorbed; another five was soon added to his own—ten, twenty, fifty, a hundred, two, three hundred. Should he stop? He hesitated.

It was the crisis, the turning point on which would hinge his whole destiny. The thought was read, "What a player!" I pity his competitor, was whispered from every quarter; his vanity was flattered; the three hundred staked and doubled. Six hundred; doubled again. Immense wealth, gained so pleasantly, floated before his imagination, without any drudgery; his disappointment sank into insignificance; his brain almost reeled as two thousand dollars, in hard gold, lay before him. He would increase it to ten that night. Almost delirious with exultation, he staked the whole; he doubled it. The four thousand was thrown and lost. "Lost! I will regain it." The five hundred was taken from his vest; his whole fortune. In ten minutes it was swept away. The offer of Mr. Maurisse to lend

was accepted by Radcliff, in the hope of redeeming his losses.

One, two, three thousand, all gone. Frantic with disappointment, he blindly rushed on, until the loss of ten thousand dollars opened his eyes to the dreadful truth, that he was overreached by systematic gamblers. He gasped for breath, and springing up, was about to rush into the open air, when Mr. Maurisse, laying his hand upon his shoulder, coolly said, "Your note for the amount, sir, before you leave us." The note was signed unconsciously; escape was the whole aim of Radcliff at that moment, the future was disregarded; and unheeding the invitation of Mr. Laurette to take a seat in his carriage, he walked rapidly up the road, not observing that he had taken the wrong direction until he had gone two miles. He was retracing his steps at the same rapid pace, when he met a stage that passed through Grangeville on its way to Varastone. It was empty; and throwing himself upon a seat, he gave way to a feeling of despair, that none but the guilty conscience that has wrought its own temporal ruin can experience. In a short time they stopped at the door of a hotel. A transparent sign, representing a large Vulcan, told the name. Not deliberating a moment, he sprang out, determining to remain here through the night, as he dreaded appearing before his family in his present state of feeling, lest they should make some discoveries relative to his situation, and giving a note to the driver, to be left at his door, speaking of necessary detention, he entered the bar-room. Mr. Buck was there alone. "Good-evening, Mr. Nesbit," he said; "I hope nothing has happened that I see you at this late hour?"

"Not at all; I have been out of town, and not wishing to disturb my family, I came to ask lodgings for the night."

"Take a seat, sir; the best room in my house is vacant, and at your service; and at any time you want it, just give me a hint, and the best man in Varastone shall be out before he knows where he is."

"Thank you, Mr. Buck," he replied, more gently than was usual with Radcliff, when addressing the class to which Mr. Buck belonged; "of your kindness I shall often avail myself."

The landlord, much gratified at this unwonted condescension, bustled around, and producing a bottle of fine old wine, set it before him. "The best old Madeira going, Mr. Nesbit, twenty-five years old, to my knowledge." Glass after glass was taken by Radcliff, and the invigorating effect soon experienced. The old man, in the kindest manner, lighted him to the door of his chamber, and as he closed it, Radcliff had a feeling of gratitude toward him, he could scarcely define. Overcome by fatigue, and lulled by the fumes of the wine, he fell into a deep sleep, and it was not until broad day, that he was aroused to a sense of his utter wretchedness. As he issued from the hotel, he looked around fearfully, lest he should be seized by the iron hand of justice. Time, he had not power to compute; it already seemed a month since he had fled from the hands of those plotting his ruin. Several times he passed and repassed his house, before he could summon courage to enter. When, at length, he did so, it was only with coward step, to steal to his own chamber. Carefully locking the door, he tried to take a retrospect of all that had occurred. How much had transpired in a day. The disappointments, which had in the morning overwhelmed him, were completely shadowed in the bitter remembrance of the deeds of the evening. It was sore repentance, but repentance that needed to be repented of—a repentance, not for the sin committed, but the result; and he felt hatred toward all mankind, in consequence; hatred to the wicked, for the sake of those who had deceived him: and to the good, for the low estimate they would place upon him. But how was it possible to extricate himself from present difficulties? If he attempted to borrow such a sum, he would lay himself open to suspicion. The whole day—a week of days to him, he remained, devising some mode of release. Five o'clock, the dinner hour had arrived,

he would surely be discovered, and gliding stealthily down stairs, he retraced his steps to the Vulcan, called for wine, and retired to the chamber he had occupied the preceding night. The same kind smile greeted him, on entering, and he almost wished that even the master of the Vulcan would bear him company, to divert the current of his thoughts. A gentle tap at the door startled him; hesitatingly, he opened it. Mr. Laurette stood before him. He extended his hand to Radcliff. Did he spurn it? No! He was his slave—entirely in his power, and Radcliff Nesbit must dissemble every feeling of hatred.

"I was on my way to your house, Nesbit," he said, "but seeing you enter here, I thought I would come in also, and settle a little business with you. Mr. Maurisse desired me to say, that he would be perfectly willing to accept a mortgage on your estate, and let the principal stand, provided you would give him a bonus, with the six per cent."

The bosom of Radcliff swelled, and his voice trembled, as he replied with as much calmness as he could possibly summon, "When it is convenient, I will settle it on my own terms, sir."

"Well! Nesbit; as you please. You have to-morrow to consider the proposal. Your note does not promise payment until evening."

"My note!" exclaimed Radcliff; "did I give a promissory note?"

"You did," he replied, coolly placing his hat upon his head, and moving towards the door, "and a collector will call at whatever place you appoint, to receive the money. Shall it be here, or at Major Nesbit's?"

"Let him call here," was the reply.

"It is well. I only wish all debtors were as prompt. Good afternoon, Nesbit. I hope you will join us again at some future time, and win back all that you lost last evening." Extending his hand, he took that of Radcliff, and professing not to notice its icy coldness, he left the room. Radcliff was alone. The veins in

his temples distended almost to bursting, he sat with his hands pressed closely upon them, to stay if possible, the throbbing, and allow him to collect his thoughts. It was in vain; reason tottered on its seat, and the clenched fist, and broken accents showed a state of mind, fast bordering on insanity. Several hours had elapsed, and he still retained the same position he had taken, at the departure of Mr. Laurette, when the door of his chamber opened. It was Mr. Buck. "I thought you would need a light, Mr. Nesbit," he remarked, "and fearing the boy would forget it, I brought it myself."

Radcliff endeavoring to conceal his feelings, thanked his host quite pleasantly, and attempted to take the lamp, but his trembling hand refused to do its office, and he was forced to ask Mr. Buck to place it on the table for him.

"You are not well, Mr. Nesbit," he said, "gentleman of your fashion and quality, ought not to be bound down to business as you are. Your time should be your own, sir. But to have leisure, there must be the where with to purchase it. That's what I tell my Angelina; your husband shall be a gentleman, even if he is a decayed one, and your money can go for what you lack in that respect, though I'm sure she's worth her weight in gold any time herself. But thirty thousand dollars, is not to be despised, any day, and it's not despised either. Here's Mr. Reed at her offer, and plenty other high tops, but she won't look at them. Well! I will be thankful if she never marries; her thirty thousand will keep her head far above the water. It's hers, in fee simple, and, if she get the fellow to please me, he shall have ten thousand to boot, the day after the knot's tied. I should be sorry though to let this get public, for fear of fortune hunters." Radcliff raised his head, his attention was attracted by the mention of the very sum. He proceeded—Mr. Reed, Mr. Ruthven, Mr. Clay and Mr. Jameston, have all popped, but got a flat."

"What Mr. Ruthven?" asked Radcliff.

"A cousin of Dr. Ruthven, a fine fellow; awful disappointment. Then Gadstone Reed."

"What! of the Varastone bar?"

"The same," says he, 'Mr. Buck, I love your daughter, and should be happy to have her without a cent.' Then there's Grenelle Jameston, with his big fortune, ready to lay it at her feet, and Josiah Rilleè, as proud as Lucifer, yet comes after my Angelina Malvina. Why, says I, Rilleè you are almost too fine a gentleman for my Liney. Says he, 'she's fit for a queen, any day, Mr. Buck, and I will make her just as fine a lady, as I am a gentleman.'" The attention of Radcliff was now completely gained. The fact was not lost on the master of the house, and he took advantage of it, to press the matter further. "Will you take a glass of my fine wine, Mr. Nesbit?" The offer was accepted. "Do you know my daughter, sir?"

"I have not that pleasure."

"No! She knows you very well. Another glass, sir? it's weak, won't harm you. She has often spoken of you, it's strange you don't know her. This wine is uncommon fine."

The eye of Mr. Nesbit did not attest to its weakness, but it evidently had revived his spirits, and rendered him quite complaisant.

"The truth is, it is for your sake, she has refused all these great offers, and, as she knows you would never think of her, she is determined to remain single." The last glass was poured out, and Radcliff held it between thumb and finger for sometime, pondering the information given. Disgust was evidently the prominent feeling. Another bottle was placed before him. "The ten thousand would be no object to you, I know, sir." The wine was again resorted to. That glass somewhat deadened the abhorrence Radcliff had at first felt to such a link; at least, the means of freeing himself from debt, stood out more prominently. "Now for my part," Mr. Buck continued, "as soon as I can see my daughter settled, I shall retire; settle far west, on a farm, and enjoy my old age in peace and quietness. But time is

passing, Mr. Nesbit; I want a little information about some accounts. I havn't much book learning, and can't exactly square them. If you will just walk down into my little parlor, where my writing desk is kept I will show them to you."

Radcliff followed, the wine had produced an entire reaction of his nervous system; every faculty was benumbed, and he, who a short time since, was in a state bordering on distraction, now felt calm and happy. As they entered, Miss Buck, who was sitting at the piano, arose to withdraw. Radcliff invited her to resume her seat, which she did, with far more grace than he supposed her capable. Her appearance, too, was pleasing, quite pleasing; a tall, slender figure, dressed simply, though richly. The thought of the union became quite tolerable; her father would be far away, and his mind relieved from embarrassment; besides, abundant means for the future. It was really an opening to fortune, and there must be something quite attractive, to draw such distinguished suitors. These reveries were interrupted by the request of Mr. Buck, that Liney would sing, "Wake me early." Her voice was extremely sweet, and the pathos, with which it was sung, lulled Radcliff into a dream on freedom from debt, &c., and the haughty Mr. Nesbit, seating himself beside her, accompanied her voice with a fine bass. She turned a look of surprise and delight upon him. At that moment, Mr. Buck was called to the bar.

"Your voice is very sweet, Miss Buck." (What a name! floated through his imagination, but that will be changed,) "I feel quite favored you should sing for me."

"It is the first time I ever sang for any gentleman," she replied, casting her eyes upon the floor, "but I would do far more for you, Mr. Nesbit."

"Indeed!" he replied, taking her hand, which was not withdrawn, "I feel quite flattered at your high estimate of me, I am sure it is reciprocated."

"How happy I am, to hear you say so," she replied, "Your reputation, and elegant address, long since won

my heart, and for two years, you have engrossed every thought."

The fumes of the wine were partly passing away, and Radcliff, was regaining a sense of his real situation, when the landlord returned.

"Where are the accounts, Mr. Buck?" he asked, "It is almost time I was at home, I fear there will be some uneasiness caused by my absence." Home! The thought was agony; and, uninvited, he walked to the sideboard, partook freely of the inebriating liquor, and, in a short time, again viewed all things through a false, though pleasant medium. The possession of a sum equivalent to his debt, was now his sole aim, and he determined to obtain it, at any sacrifice. While he was revolving this matter in his mind, a card was handed Miss Buck by one of the waiters. She looked displeased.

"Say to him, Anthony, that I am particularly engaged, and cannot see him this evening."

"Who is that, Liney?" asked her father.

"Mr. Jameston," she replied, in a low tone, "He is exceedingly intrusive, after all that has passed between us."

"He is a very clever fellow, Liney," Mr. Buck replied, still in an undertone, "you might go further and fare worse."

Liney looked doubtfully.

"Think well about it, before you entirely refuse him; he is a great man, a very rich man, and you would be one of the tip-tops of Varastone."

The very hesitating look of Miss Buck, alarmed Radcliff, who, intent only on obtaining the twenty thousand on the following evening by some means, resolved, even to take this desperate step. What a change a day had wrought, in the feelings of the proud, and ambitious Radcliff Nesbit; he, who the preceding morning, felt almost secure of the hand of the admired Miss Spencer, now driven to accept that of the daughter of a disreputable innkeeper. Professing to notice nothing that passed in regard to Mr. Jameston,

he turned to Mr. Buck, and said, "I feel much flattered, sir, at your daughter's partiality for me, and will be very happy, with your permission to become her suitor."

The eyes of Miss Liney were cast on the ground, and "Your suit shall be propitious, Mr. Nesbit," escaped her lips.

"And I am sure, Mr. Nesbit," replied the landlord, rising, and shaking his hand cordially, "you have my full and free consent. But there's an old saying, 'Happy is the wooing that's not long a-doing;' now what do you say to a parson to-night to finish the matter?"

The struggle in the mind of Radcliff was indeed pitiable; had wine not obtained the mastery and clouded his perceptions, every feeling would have revolted at such a step. Pistol—banishment—forging—in short, anything in his estimation would have been far preferable to descending to a low grade in society. Folding his arms, he stood perfectly silent, irresolute how to proceed.

"I suppose silence begets consent? Hey! Mr. Nesbit?"

Radcliff bowed. Anthony was immediately called. "Tony, go over to Dr. Irwing's and say that he is wanted here immediately on very important business. As the man closed the door, Miss Buck, looking quite offended, remarked, "You are too precipitate, father; you have no consideration for maidenly feeling and delicacy." Radcliff, by a great effort, arose from his chair, but his head reeling from the effect of the wine, he was obliged to resume his seat. In stimulating drinks he scarcely ever indulged, consequently he was easily affected.

"Suffer me, Miss Buck," he forced himself to say, "to add my wishes to those of your father, that the matter should not be delayed."

"Well! if your heart is so set upon it, dear Mr. Nesbit," she replied, "my wishes shall be subservient to yours."

"Dear Mr. Nesbit!" How his whole nature revolted;

disgust was portrayed in every feature, but it was not noticed by the maiden who was so soon to plight her faith to him.

In a short time Anthony returned, accompanied by Dr. Irwing, a tall, venerable looking old gentleman, apparently about sixty-five.

"I was careful not to delay," he remarked, after taking the seat offered by the host, "fearing there might be some serious illness. Your man declined giving me any information."

"No, sir,—no," replied Mr. Buck, bustling around in evident confusion; "a little love matter, sir,—a little matter that can't very well be settled without some help from one of your cloth, sir." Radcliff's head bent low as Dr. Irwing surveyed him with a keen penetrating look. "I want you just to tie the knot between Mr. Nesbit and my daughter."

The old gentleman stood for a moment in perfect amazement. Radcliff averted his face, arose, and seized the back of the chair to enable him to stand firmly. Miss Buck placed herself beside him.

Dr. Irwing laid his hand on the arm of Radcliff: "Radcliff Nesbit," he exclaimed, "are you mad? What is the meaning of this?"

Radcliff endeavored to answer, but shame and mortification sealed his lips.

"Answer me, my dear boy. Has this man bereft you of your senses by his vile drink, that you are about taking this disgraceful step? Sooner would I follow you to your grave, than put my seal to such a connection."

"What do you mean by disgraceful?" shouted Buck, in a voice of thunder. "I'll make you sweat for such language about my family. I'll take the law of you. It's slander, and nothing but slander, and I'll make you prove that me and mine would disgrace any body. Go on with the ceremony, and get your money for the job; that's all you have to do with it."

Dr. Irwing awaited patiently the end of this harangue, then fixing his eye sternly upon him, replied, "Beware,

old man, lest you fill up the measure of your iniquity, by adding to your catalogue of crime, that of bringing down the gray hairs of a grandfather and a father with sorrow to the grave. I do not blame you, Radcliff; you do not know this man as I do. He could easily overreach the simple-hearted."

Miss Buck sobbed aloud. At length Radcliff stammered, "This step is with my own free will and consent, Dr. Irwing."

"My boy! My dear boy! I cannot see you thus beguiled, and you shall not be the victim of the perfidy of this family. My carriage is in waiting; I will not leave this house without you. Return home, obtain the sanction of your parents; I will then have nothing further to say; but under no circumstances, will I ever unite you to this woman."

The excitement produced by this scene, and the bitter mortification felt by Radcliff, that the old friend of his grandfather, and the pastor of his family, should be its witness, tended in a measure to dissipate the effect of the inebriating draught, and he began to realize his situation. "I am on the brink of a precipice," he exclaimed, "save me, oh! save me," and before his pastor had time to speak, he rushed from the house, and was, at once, lost to view in the darkness. Dr. Irwing sprang into his carriage, directing his man to drive with the utmost haste to the house of Major Nesbit, intending to alarm the family if he could see nothing of him; but, after waiting a short time, he saw a figure, which he knew to be Radcliff, glide stealthily along, and, with a small key, open the door, closing it quietly after him. The old gentleman, with a heavy heart, returned to his home, determined to say nothing upon the subject unless there should be some further development.

## CHAPTER XI.

“The praise of holy men is a  
Promise of praise from their Master ;  
A forerunning earnest of thy welcome,  
‘Well done faithful servant.’ ”

“YOU are late, my son,” remarked Major Nesbit, laying his hand affectionately on the arm of Howard, as he entered the dining-room, with a face beaming with pleasure. “It is six o’clock, one hour beyond your usual time; I must know the cause of the detention of so systematic a gentleman.”

“On that score, I will make all due explanation in time, father,” replied Howard; “but first let me tell you that my cause is won, a few laurels gathered, and more than all, a check for twenty-five thousand to be given by Spencer, Hope & Co., to-morrow.”

“I rejoice, my son, that you have triumphed, but your mother and I think, in the disposition of the money, you are rather too unselfish. Your own settlement in life ought to be considered.”

“How can I be more happy, father, than in my present situation? I desire no better settlement. One tithe, of course, belongs to the Lord. I thought the payment of the three thousand dollar debt on our little church, would be an acceptable offering.”

“It seems a large sum, my son.”

“A large sum has been bestowed upon me, father.”

“When casting thy bread upon the waters,” returned Mrs. Nesbit, “what is the promise?”

“Yes, mother, I have faith to believe it will be returned four-fold, spiritually. His promises are yea, and amen, forever. The cancelling of our mortgage will make us three hundred a year richer; and Mr. Morgan has offered to borrow ten thousand on a fine estate he

has at Rocklyn. Although wealthy, he cannot command a large sum at present, and wishes to establish his son in business. That will add nine hundred dollars to our income; we shall be no longer obliged to economise so closely.

"I have been listening, breathlessly, Howard," said Cornelia, "fearing you would dispose of all the money, before my wants were supplied. Do, please, let me have enough for some lace on which I have set my heart. As bridesmaid to Kate, I shall look like no one else there, unless I can obtain a few hundred."

"With my consent, Nellie," replied her father, "the hard earnings of Howard, for which he has lost sleep and rest, shall never be expended for that which he entirely disapproves. Your expenses already, for this year, amount almost to four times that of your sister."

"And yet, no one could economise more strictly. I have spent but two hundred and twenty dollars, father. I must have been a perfect recluse for want of dress, had it not been for presents of jewelry, and the little I have coaxed out of Rad. As to Marion, she turns and twists her things, until I tire looking at her. It is quite an era to see a new article of dress upon her."

"I only wish, instead of tiring," replied her father, "you would imitate, Cornelia."

"Papa, dear papa!" exclaimed little Hattie, "when will our time come to tell brother; it is so splendid!"

"Dear child," said Howard, lifting her on one knee, while Houston, in great glee seated himself upon the other. "What is this splendid news?"

"Oh! its elegant," she replied, clapping her hands in extacy. "Houssie can drive it, and drive me, and when he gets tired, I can drive him. Isn't that splendid."

"But, Birdie," said Major Nesbit, "you begin quite at the wrong end."

"Oh! no, papa, please hush. It's a conundrum. Brother must guess."

"I am afraid I must give it up, Birdie."

"Then get the letter, sister, please, and that will give it up."

Hattie's directions were obeyed, and a note placed in the hand of Howard, by Marion. "Please read the last part first, brother, that's the part will please you; that's the conundrum."

"Well, well, the conundrum will come after a while." The note was opened; it ran as follows:

"Will Mrs. Nesbit accept from her grateful friend, Mr. Solomon Mordecai, the pair of horses and carriage sent by the bearer. The horses gained the prize at the last fair, and he thinks will do good service. The carriage was purposely chosen as being commodious and comfortable, rather than for the elegance of its appearance. The Shetland pony"—

"Here it comes, here it comes," whispered Hattie, placing one hand upon his cheek, and looking closely into the face of her brother. "Can't you guess it? Don't you see it now."

"Pretty nearly, Birdie," he replied, kissing her affectionately, "the secret will soon be out; wait a little."

"The Shetland pony, sent for the children is so gentle, that Houston need not fear to drive him, and the small carriage attached, so low and safe, that little Birdie may take an airing at pleasure."

"Well, that is a splendid conundrum truly," remarked Howard. "What an addition it will be to our comfort! Mother and Aunt Harriet are both so fond of riding, and Hogan is an excellent driver. Providence is indeed leading us in a way we know not."

"Yes," replied Major Nesbit, "that snow storm at which Cornelia was so much displeased, has been the means of enriching us. I do not doubt the fresh country air will do much also, towards restoring the health of Houston."

The eye of the gentle boy lighted, as he enquired, "Will I be permitted to drive it, papa?"

"Certainly, my son."

"Why, to be sure, Houssie," remarked his sister, with an air of patronage. "When you are tired I will drive for you."

"And now for the cause of detention, my son," said Major Nesbit, playfully, "the loss of that hour yet remains a mystery."

"You will not pronounce it a lost one, father when you hear my story. As the stage drew near grandfather's I hesitated whether to alight, but seeing him at his usual post on the piazza, watching to salute me as I passed, the temptation could not be resisted to communicate what I knew would afford him so much pleasure, and springing out, was soon seated in the parlor, with grandfather, grandmother and Aunt Harriet. Grandmother wept tears of joy, at my bright prospects, and the blessing which grandfather gave me enriched my very soul. Oh! that blessing, it was rich in faith; rich in eloquence; rich in affection. What a privilege to have the prayers of such a Christian. I confess, while there, time glided rapidly, and an hour passed, ere I was aware. When I took leave the old gentleman followed me to the gate, and when at the distance of two or three squares, I looked back and saw him looking over the gate watching me intently. I waved my hat in token of gratitude, which was answered in the playful manner so peculiar to himself, and which renders him so attractive to all with whom he mingles."

"You can scarcely imagine, Howard, the comfort it gives me that my children revere the name of one so dear to me. I have been greatly blessed that such parents have been spared me so long."

"Not dearer to you than me, mother; they have always acted a parent's part by their grandchildren. But I am committing the same error. Letting time glide on too rapidly; nine o'clock. I must go up and arrange some papers for the court, to-morrow. Father, is my explanation satisfactory?"

"Absolution granted on the spot, my son, without further trial."

"Thank you, father; I must now say, 'Good night,' I have quite enough to do, to keep me up until twelve."

After a warm good-night kiss to little Hattie, Howard proceeded to his chamber. Seating himself quietly at the table, he was busied arranging some papers, preparatory to the next day's trial, when his attention was arrested by the sound of a footstep in the room communicating with his own, occupied as a chamber by Radcliff.

Knowing that his brother was absent, he arose and walked toward the door, which was partly open. He was startled at seeing Radcliff, who was pacing the floor wildly, not having noticed the entrance of Howard. Apprehending some trouble from his strange manner, he extinguished his lamp, and stood irresolute how to proceed. At length Radcliff threw himself into a chair, and sat for some time perfectly motionless. The light fell full upon his features; they quivered with agony, and Howard longed to go to him and endeavor to soothe his troubled spirit, but knew it would be in vain, as he had long since lost all influence over him. Suddenly he sprang up, and opening a closet, he took out a pistol, examined it carefully, and loaded it. He then laid it upon the bureau, again looked wildly around, and, removing his boots, opened the door and disappeared. Howard sprang in, and hastily unloading it, placed it in the same spot, and returned to his own room, taking the precaution to lock the closet door, that he might have no opportunity of reloading.

He soon returned, bringing with him a small writing-desk, a cheque was taken out, and, with a trembling hand and great hesitancy, signed. After much examination, it was destroyed; several others met the same fate. At length, springing up, he seized the pistol, and, with a loud groan, pointed it to his temple. Howard could restrain himself no longer. Rushing in, he grasped his hand, exclaiming, "Madman! Will you rush into the presence of your Maker, unbidden and unprepared?"

At the sound of his brother's voice, Radcliff started, and sternly asked: "By what right do you intrude upon my privacy, and endeavor to avert my fatal destiny. Release your hold and leave me, I command you, or your life may be the forfeit of your obstinate interference."

With as much strength of nerve as purpose, Howard calmly answered, "Your instrument is powerless, Radcliff; even should you desire to injure me. By the right of an elder brother, I came to allay, or at least sympathize with your sufferings; and by the right of a Christian, to save your soul from blood-guiltiness; that soul, dearer to me than my own life."

The eye of Radcliff fell, and the sternness of his countenance, which had assumed almost a ferocious appearance, gave way to an expression of the deepest melancholy. Permitting himself to be led to a seat by his brother, he remained with his eyes fixed upon the floor, perfectly motionless. Howard, overcome by this sudden change to entire passiveness, so foreign to the character of Radcliff, for some time was unable to speak. Forgetting all his evil traits, which, of late, had almost alienated them, his mind reverted to their boyish days, when, hand in hand, they trudged to school together; often wandering from the beaten path in pursuit of some gilded butterfly, or to gather berries close to the water's edge, and bounding on again with gladsome hearts, little dreaming of anything but a joyous future.

The silence was broken by Radcliff. "My day of grace has passed, Howard; here, there is nothing but disgrace, poverty, ruin, before me, and in the world to come, everlasting banishment from the presence of God."

"God is always merciful, he willeth not the death of any; but grief has clouded your vision, Radcliff, and the rainbow of promise is obscured. Can I not in some measure alleviate the trouble that is pressing upon you?"

Radcliff shook his head mournfully. "One day has

wrought a world of hopeless misery, Howard; my ruin is sealed. A debt of ten thousand dollars hangs over me."

"Ten thousand! How has such a sum been contracted?"

"By treachery. Seduced by professed friends to gamble. The law would acquit me of an honest debt, but *this*, made public, would utterly ruin me. My name would be handed down with infamy; my associates would shun me; my employers would dismiss me; and where, oh, where," he added, groaning with agony, "should I hide my head?"

"And what, if paid?" enquired Howard.

"Paid! The world would be a paradise to me, and I have learned a lesson never to be forgotten. I should lead a new life. I should seek the sanctuary, and there pour forth my thanksgiving. But, alas, alas! there is nothing left for me but disgrace or death. I prefer the latter. Leave me, Howard; you have done your part—your skirts are free from my blood."

Howard arose, and taking the hand of Radcliff, said, "This debt shall be paid to-morrow."

Radcliff started to his feet. "Where? How? By whom?"

"By me; I will receive the amount from Mr. Spencer to-morrow."

Radcliff grasped his hand. He tried to speak, but only whispered, "Benefactor—unworthy;" and throwing himself upon his knees, he ejaculated, "The Lord be thanked, that one to whom I have been so ungrateful should be willing to make such a sacrifice for me. But," he continued, springing up, "I here solemnly vow to lead a new life; to seek other associates; to be a comfort to my family, and at once seek the salvation of my soul."

"God grant, my dear brother," replied Howard, much affected, "that your soul may be your first care. I should consider my money well bestowed, if it were the means of leading you to the foot of the Cross. Let us now seek some rest. We will retire to my chamber,

and commend ourselves to Him who never slumbers, nor sleeps." They knelt, and the fervent prayer of Howard touched the now deeply humbled soul of Radcliff. Like a child, he wept; the frame of the strong man shook, and feelings, pent up hour after hour, now burst forth unrestrained. Howard said nothing, but suffered the tempest to expend itself; calmness succeeded, and Howard, changing his coat for a morning wrapper, laid himself beside his brother. The whole story of the transactions at the house of Mr. Maurisse was recapitulated, and all his sufferings so graphically described, that Howard, in sympathy, lost sight of the great sacrifice he was about making. Morning came; sleep had not even been sought, and Howard arose unrefreshed and miserable.

"You will see Mr. Laurette, Howard," said Radcliff. "I never wish again to meet him, if it can be avoided."

"At what place?"

"The Vulcan."

"The Vulcan! I would not risk my reputation by entering it. The landlord—I forget his name—has been twice cited before the court for misdemeanor; but, as nothing could be proved decidedly, he escaped. I will send a note there, to be handed Mr. Laurette, requesting him to meet me at my office on the following morning."

"You can make your own arrangements. The sense of my obligation to you will cease only with life. But, may I ask, Howard, that father—"

"I understand you, Radcliff. I shall mention it to none. Your reputation I will endeavor to sustain."

"Thank you, Howard, thank you! I feel like a freed bird, roaming in my native woods. My happiness is without alloy."

Howard colored. It was not noticed by Radcliff, whose back was toward him. He continued,

"Had I known the relief at hand, how much misery it would have saved me. You must feel very happy, Howard, at being the instrument of it."

The brow of his brother lowered, as he replied:

"The loss of ten thousand dollars is not a cause for thanksgiving; only a stern necessity induces it."

"Of course, of course. I shall endeavor to get forward in business, and repay you."

The breakfast bell rang, and they both descended to the dining-room. Much surprise was expressed at the sudden appearance of Radcliff, but Howard felt somewhat chagrined at his manner, which evinced entire freedom from all care.

"Your pale face, my son," remarked Major Nesbit, "does not bespeak much health gained by your excursion."

"No, father," he replied, "I only went a short distance out of town, but was delayed longer than I at first intended."

As no further explanation was proffered, Major Nesbit dropped the subject; but the sad, abstracted manner of Howard showed a state of mind very different from the preceding evening, and the anxious eye of his mother soon perceived that his breakfast stood almost untasted before him. Very soon, asking to be excused on the plea of arranging some law papers, not completed the evening previous, he left the table, and retired to his own room.

The eyes of little Hattie filled with tears, as he closed the door without noticing her, and laying her head in her mother's lap, she whispered, "What is the matter with brother, mamma?"

Mrs. Nesbit merely stroked her hair, without replying. Major Nesbit, remarking, "Howard is not himself this morning," left the room. Radcliff soon followed, to take the stage for Varastone; and such had been the excitement of the day previous, that it was not until safely seated in it, that he remembered his desk in the counting-house of Mr. Major was filled by another. Determining to obtain a situation, if possible, before evening, he enquired at various places, but was answered always with a look of surprise, that he should suppose there could be a vacancy, when hundreds were out of employ, and many leaving the city

even for the far West, to endeavor to obtain a livelihood for their families.

Discouraged and dispirited, towards evening he returned home, resolving to say nothing of his present embarrassment, hoping on the morrow to be more successful.

Eleven o'clock, on the following day, was the hour appointed by Howard to see Mr. Laurette at his office. When he entered, Howard was alone. "You will be seated, sir," he said, coldly returning his very courteous bow, and placing a chair for himself near the table, at quite a distance from him.

"I received your note last evening, Mr. Nesbit, when I expected to meet your brother, at the Vulcan."

"My brother has deputed me to settle the matter for him, sir."

"An excellent arrangement. This is not the first time I have had the pleasure of meeting you, Mr. Nesbit."

"My memory does not serve me in recognizing you, Mr. Laurette," replied Howard, very gravely. "Would that your acquaintance with my brother had been of equally casual a nature."

Mr. Laurette for a moment looked confused, but soon recovering his self-possession, observed, "I scarcely wonder you are annoyed at the unfortunate turn of this matter, but with myself it is an every-day occurrence. I have become quite accustomed to losses."

"As it is impossible, in this case, for my brother to obtain any redress, I sent for you to offer you eight thousand dollars, in lieu of the whole debt."

"Mr. Maurisse will not accept it; but a mortgage on your brother's estate he has before offered to receive."

"Estate! My brother has nothing. I have come prepared to pay you this sum; if not accepted, of the bankrupt law he will avail himself, and you will lose what I now offer you."

"Do you expect me to believe such a tale?" replied Mr. Laurette, with a sneer. "I have your brother's

authority for saying he has property to the amount of fifty thousand dollars."

"The information I have given you is correct, sir. Make what use of it you think proper; only determine promptly, as time is waning."

"I must see Mr. Maurisse before I can make any settlement of that nature."

"The eight thousand I now offer is my own, sir. Cross that threshold, I retract my agreement, and the law may take its course."

Mr. Laurette hesitated, and Howard busied himself arranging some papers that lay before him.

"Your proposition is unjust, Mr. Nesbit; the loss of two thousand dollars is matter of consideration."

"In my view, sir, the injustice lies in the acceptance of the eight thousand. However, my proposal is before you; decide as it pleases you."

Mr. Laurette seated himself at the table, and asked for pen and ink. A receipt on account was then written and handed Howard.

"This is trifling Mr. Laurette."

"Can you assure me, sir, that Mr. Radcliff Nesbit has no property?"

"No, sir."

"No!" exclaimed Mr. Laurette. "Was I mistaken in supposing you made that assertion?"

"I have said all that I shall say upon the subject; if my word is not sufficient, my assurance would be equally worthless. Unless, officially, my yea must be yea, and my nay, nay."

With a troubled countenance, Mr. Laurette again resumed his pen; a receipt was duly signed. Howard, after examining it carefully, drew out a check for the eight thousand dollars,—"There, sir," he observed, as he placed it in his hand, "receive your unjust gains, and revel in the consciousness of possessing riches amassed by fraud and treachery."

"I hope your piety is not tested by your meekness, Mr. Nesbit," he replied, sneeringly, "if so, if weighed, in the balances you would be found wanting. Now,

I am far more consistent, I profess to serve the world, and endeavor to act in accordance with its precepts." As he spoke, he arose to take leave. Howard, also arose, and fixing his eye sternly upon him, said, "You have entered a hard service, Mr. Laurette, for time and eternity. The banner under which you have enlisted, will soon be laid low, when truth and righteousness, shall prevail in every land. Good morning, sir." With a cold bow, returning, his familiar, "Good morning, Nesbit; he again seated himself at the table, but his flushed cheek, shewed powerful excitement, and it was not until aroused by the entrance of a client, that he stirred from the position he had taken on the departure of Mr. Laurette.

The day wore away heavily with Radcliff, obtaining a situation seemed almost hopeless, and he determined to pay a visit to Mr. Spencer, as a last resort. He was received kindly, and cordially by Mr. Spencer, and his business made known. "I am very sorry, Mr. Nesbit, I shall have no vacancy, although my head clerk becomes a junior partner; leaving his place vacant, all the others rise one grade higher in consequence, there is but one desk to be supplied, at a salary of five hundred a year; which, of course, would not suit you."

Radcliff, from a stranger, gladly would have accepted it, but a small office under Mr. Spencer's clerks; could it be thought of? It could not, and with a sad heart, he left the store, and was pursuing his way listlessly up the street, when he saw Miss Spencer, and rather a plain-looking young gentleman, whom he supposed to be Dr. Ruthven, coming toward him. Gladly would he have escaped recognition, but it was impossible, and assuming a gay manner, he advanced to meet them. "Shopping, at this early hour, I presume," he remarked, turning to walk with her.

"Time must have flown rapidly with you, Mr. Nesbit, if you consider two o'clock so early. Dr. Ruthven, Mr. Nesbit," she continued, "We have been

making a few visits this morning, and are now wending our way, home again."

"I have been anxiously awaiting an introduction to you for several days, Mr. Nesbit," said Dr. Ruthven, "I much desired a personal acquaintance, knowing you so well by reputation." How fortunate thought Radcliff, I did not accept that pitiful situation. Receiving the advances of Dr. Ruthven courteously, he walked with them to the door of Mr. Spenser, hoping there to be freed from their society, but Dr. Ruthven having an engagement, bade Miss Spenser good morning, and took the arm of Radcliff. "If you will walk in with me one moment, Mr. Nesbit," he said, as they came opposite the house they were to occupy, "I have some directions I wish to give. I can then have the pleasure of your company, as we are going in the same direction." Radcliff reluctantly followed. As they passed through the spacious parlors, and ascended the palatial stairway in search of the workmen, all his feeling of bitter disappointment again arose at his irreparable loss. At length, feeling his silence might be construed correctly, he forced himself to remark, "You will have a fine establishment here, Dr. Ruthven."

"Much more elegant, Mr. Nesbit," be replied, "than is in accordance either with my taste, conscience, or judgment, but my preferences, which I very plainly stated by letter, were all overruled by Mrs. Spencer."

"I cannot imagine why you should object to so beautiful a mansion. You will have far more weight in society."

"Not in any society worth cultivating. We do not intend mingling in the gay world. I always despised the routine of balls and parties, and Miss Spencer is perfectly satiated. We often talk over the home comforts we are resolved to enjoy; a few cherished friends, the Nesbit family among the number; social companies of ten or twelve kindred spirits often taking a cup of tea together, or friends dropping in without invitation; that is my idea of rational living."

Radcliff looked at him in amazement. What was the attraction to Miss Spencer? His appearance was certainly not imposing: somewhat below the common height, and although with an expressive countenance, his light hair and eyes constituted him in the view of Radcliff, who was a connoisseur in beauty, any thing but handsome. To most persons, the very pleasing manner and frank, simple, independent character of Dr. Ruthven would have far more than atoned for the want of symmetrical proportions, and if Radcliff had noticed his demeanor toward those in his employ, and overheard their remark, "I would know that to be a real gentleman anywhere; he touches his hat and speaks just as if we were all gentlemen like himself;" he might have learned a lesson on politeness, taught even by the plain Dr. Ruthven to the extremely elegant Radcliff Nesbit. After walking several squares together, Radcliff, professing to have an engagement in another direction, and promising very soon to call upon him, bade him "good morning," with a pleasant smile, but with a feeling that almost amounted to dislike.

"What have I not lost?" he murmured, "and how much better fitted to become a member of the Spencer family. The man knows nothing of fashion and elegance; Miss Spencer will be miserable, I know she will. 'Social companies of ten or twelve:' I suppose something similar to that at home last evening. In my attempt to change my course of action, I staid at home, and my ears still tingle with colporteurs, church debts, and Sunday schools. Let me see, who had we there? The Miss Stocktons, Miss Girardus, Miss de Wilton. Yes! all intimate friends of the Miss Ruthvens, and our Marion added to the number. Why a fellow will surely be expected at least to say grace in such a circle. Alas! alas! poor Miss Spencer; she is really more to be pitied than myself, but now for some extra effort for a situation, as I cannot forget I am Radcliff Nesbit, without present means or future expectations." After vain enquiry he took the stage

for Grangeville, and at four o'clock entered his father's library, where he found Howard.

"Why are you alone, Howard?" he enquired, "is nobody at home?"

"Mother, father and the children have driven up to Mr. Mordecai's to return their thanks for the presents, Marion has gone to meet the Dorcas, and Cornelia is walking with Mr. Lennox."

"I have observed of late, he was very attentive. I hope Cornelia does not intend accepting his addresses."

"On what ground do you object?"

"Want of position; he is scarcely known beyond the precincts of Grangeville."

"He is well known and appreciated within its limits. I am only surprised at his choice. He has asked and obtained father's permission to address her."

"Well, I am sadly disappointed. When did this occur?"

"Mother told me before she went to ride this afternoon." Radcliff walked the floor.

"I always thought Cornelia would mend our fortune by making a splendid match. Mr. Torrington and half a dozen others are dancing attendance on her continually. It is wonderful she should have encouraged Lennox for a moment: she cannot be serious in doing so."

"Radcliff Nesbit, do you place so low an estimate on Cornelia's principles?"

"I should place a far higher estimate on her judgment, were she to decline him; but, by-the-bye, Howard, have you seen Mr. Laurette. It really escaped my memory."

"I saw him and settled with him; I was obliged to pay him eight thousand dollars cash; he tried to obtain the whole sum from me, but I firmly resisted him."

"How could you do that, without appearing contracted?"

"Contracted! In what connection do you apply the term, in this case?"

"It certainly had an appearance of meanness, or what would be far worse, of inability to pay the whole sum."

"Inability!" exclaimed Howard, his whole face suffused with indignation; "I stated the case briefly to the man, your entire inability, and my consequent necessity, and obtained a receipt in full, very much against his will."

"Had I known, Howard, you would thus have degraded me, I would have submitted to anything rather than have had you transact my business. The information was so uncalled for, and my position in society altogether lowered by such an admission."

The eye of Howard rested on Radcliff, as he slowly replied, "The transactions of your business, Radcliff, was at a far greater sacrifice than you seem fully to realize. It was to save, not ruin your reputation that I consented to make it."

"Certainly, certainly, Howard; I am much obliged; but—" The entrance of Major Nesbit interrupted the conversation; the sentence was left unfinished. The flushed and angry look of Howard did not escape the observation of his father, and, determining to learn the cause, if possible, he remarked, "Something has occurred certainly, of an unpleasant nature, Howard; has Mr. Spencer disappointed you, and cast down all your bright visions of riches poured into the bosom of the house of Nesbit?" Radcliff immediately left the room.

"I have received and lost a large portion of it, father, but am bound to secrecy. It was entirely unforeseen and unavoidable."

"Was Radcliff the recipient?"

"My lips are sealed by promise, father."

"Then, I must draw my own conclusions; that selfish boy has imposed upon your generous nature. His salary ought certainly to cover even his expensive habits. From this time, I intend obliging him to give three hundred dollars yearly for his maintenance at home. It will be advantageous to himself to retrench a little."

The bell sounding for dinner, Major Nesbit and Howard joined the other members of the family in the dining room. Hattie took her accustomed seat beside her brother. The meal was taken almost in silence. Howard endeavored to appear cheerful, but the shade upon his brow bore witness to a state of mind not quite in unison with the effort. Radcliff sat without speaking, and left the room as soon as the table was dismissed.

"I have a small present for my sisters," said Howard, drawing two envelopes from his pocket, as he followed them into the piazza.

"What is it, Howard?" said Cornelia; "anything in the jewelry line, which I so much need just now? The paper is soft; I almost fear to open it." Marion said nothing, but quietly unfolding her package, a certificate appeared to view. "Stock to the amount of one thousand dollars," she exclaimed, "I am enchanted!" Sixty dollars a year will obviate the necessity of always applying to papa for little matters."

"That's a good deal; isn't it, sister?" said Hattie. "I am so glad. Now you can get that beautiful cap you wanted for mamma, and my little white boots, you know; and a great many other nice things for mamma, and yourself, too, dear sister," she added, throwing her arms affectionately around her. "Couldn't we go now to get them?"

"We shall have no money for six months, Hattie; then only the half of sixty."

"Half of sixty," pondered Hattie, counting her fingers backwards, most industriously; "sixty, fifty-nine, fifty-eight. I can't tell how much that is, sister; it's a good deal, Isn't it?"

"Indeed it is. But what is the matter, Cornelia? I will exchange, if you are not equally well pleased. Howard made no distinction in handing them."

"I have no preference, of course," she replied, pettishly; "but, my dear Howard, when you knew how important it was to make some appearance at this wedding, why could you not have given me a portion of the principal? I would rather have five hundred dollars,

to expend just now, than all the sixties a year, during the remainder of my life. A beautiful dress might have been obtained, some Honiton lace, and the few appurtenances I absolutely require."

Howard made no reply, but continued slowly sharpening a pencil for Hattie.

"As it is a matter of so little moment to you, Cornelia," Major Nesbit observed, "you had better place it in the hand of your sister. By her it will certainly be appreciated. I, or any but yourself, would consider it a munificent gift."

"Oh! papa, you misunderstand me; I am very much obliged to Howard. It is a large sum, I know, but my necessities are so great, and my difficulties not appreciated by any one," she added, bursting into a flood of tears, "I wish I had never become acquainted with Kate Spencer; her brother Philip is such a close observer of dress, and ridicules everything like imitation."

"And have you so little independence, that the opinion of even Philip Spencer should be of importance?"

"It certainly is not pleasant to be treated with contempt," she replied, drying her eyes, and taking some netting from her pocket.

"Does Mr. Spencer presume to treat you contemptuously, Cornelia?" Howard enquired in a low voice, without raising his eyes.

"I have sometimes seen a contemptuous smile, when he has been with me shopping, when I have purchased an inferior article."

"And why do you permit him to accompany you on such occasions?" enquired her brother.

"Oh! I don't know. There is an air of style in having fashionable gentlemen in attendance."

"Even with an air of contempt as the penalty," observed her father.

"Philip Spencer may be extremely fashionable," said Howard, "but he is not capable of measuring true worth and refinement."

"Of whom are you speaking, Howard?" asked Radcliff, who at that moment entered the piazza, and tossed himself carelessly into a chair beside Cornelia.

"Philip Spencer," was the reply.

"I never liked him either, but have made use of him as a stepping-stone."

"Stepping-stone—to what?"

"To society, of course. Though why we should ever have lost our position, I cannot tell. The relatives of Senator Houston might surely have a firm footing in Varastone."

"Senator Houston's brother," replied Major Nesbit, "aimed at a much higher position for his descendants, and succeeded in shielding them from every outward evil influence; gayety and fashion found no place there, but the refined, the pious, the educated, of whatever rank, were those sought as companions for his children."

"Yes; but, father—"

"But what, my son?"

"You are speaking of the church ideas, &c., but in the world Philip Spencer holds a certain station none can assail; his ancestors are sprigs of nobility ages back."

Major Nesbit smiled. "Where is your republicanism Radcliff? His mother's relatives may trace to Noah, but I would lay claim to true respectability, in one whom to acknowledge would bring a blush to the cheek of young Spencer; I allude to his father's grandfather, Philip Spencer, a carpenter, and the intimate friend of old Senator Houston."

"A carpenter!" exclaimed both Radcliff and Cornelia.

"Yes, a carpenter; a sensible, religious, well-educated carpenter; Senator Houston died long before him, but his memory has always been cherished by your grandfather, with whom he made a point of dining once a week, during the latter years of his life. Mr. Spencer speaks of him with the utmost respect, and affection."

"Does he ever allude to his trade, papa?" asked Cornelia.

"His trade neither elevated, nor depressed him, Nellie; true respectability does not consist in the station which you occupy, but the manner in which you fill it. Members of the same family may hold very different positions. In the view of every well balanced mind, old Philip Spencer would hold a prominent place; young Philip, an equally low one."

"Well," replied Cornelia, with a toss of the head, calculated to settle the matter definitely; "keep me from associating with carpenters, or sons of carpenters, be they ever so respectable."

"You were not aware, Nellie," said her father, laughing, "how much gracious condescension you were exercising in noticing this said Master Philip Spencer. Were you?" Cornelia colored, but made no reply.

"To change the subject of discourse," said Mrs. Nesbit, "did you invite your friends to dine with us to morrow, Howard?"

"Yes, mother, you said it was convenient."

Perfectly so, my son. With our good cook, and Hogan for waiter, we can always make it convenient."

"Who are your guests, Howard?" enquired Radcliff.

"Dr. Ruthven, Mr. Jameston, and Mr. Reed."

"Reed and Jameston! Phew! coming up in the world, Howard; where did you meet them?"

"At the bar. The first advances were made by them. I like them much; they are extremely well informed on every subject. Mr. Mordecai is coming with them; I met him this morning, as he left here."

"Poor Mordecai," said Radcliff, laughing, and looking archly at Marion, "he has a long ride to the house of Major Nesbit daily, for the purpose of seeing nobody but papa."

Marion colored deeply.

"Well, that's four," said Cornelia, rather pettishly; "Is that the end of the list?"

"I called on Mr. Lennox, this morning, Nellie, to ask him to join us; he was not at home, but I wish you

would give him my invitation, if I do not see him. I desire to introduce him to these gentleman they would assimilate precisely."

Radcliff's face crimsoned. "Mr. Lennox told me he was not desirous of extending his circle beyond his own precincts. Why force him to do so, Howard?"

"He can use his pleasure," replied his brother.

"I was going to propose Philip Spencer as a guest, but there are quite enough already."

"What! as a kindred spirit?" enquired Howard, laughing."

"No, but as we must necessarily have courses, &c., I thought it would be a good opportunity of returning their politeness. I have avoided inviting him heretofore, because our table was so unlike their own."

"All our courses to-morrow, may be easily computed, Rad," replied Howard; "precisely the same number to which we sit down daily, only of a more delicate quality. So much ceremony on a set day would preclude a sincere welcome when uninvited. My idea of comfort resolves itself into a neat table at all times; and to bring a friend home, without fear of embarrassment at the meagre fare, after a lordly feast. The Miss Ruthven's spend all next week with us; will you course them also?"

"And you will really seat these gentlemen to such a dinner!"

"Really will; as relaxation is our object, and we intend rambling far away into the country, some twenty miles, beyond us, six courses would be rather an ordeal to pass through."

"Ah, well, well," said Radcliff, rising and looking at his watch, "as the style, or rather the want of it, the society, or the ramble would be little in consonance with the tastes of Philip, I shall omit asking him to join the circle; Cornelia, will you walk over to Mrs. Winthrop's."

"Yes, Radcliff, any thing to pass away a weary hour."

"Godliness, with contentment is a great gain," re-

marked Major Nesbit, with a sigh, as his eye followed them, slowly and carelessly sauntering down the lawn.

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## CHAPTER XII.

“Affect not to despise beauty,  
None are freed from its dominion,  
But regard it not a pearl of price ;  
It is fleeting as a bow in the clouds.”

AT precisely three o’clock, the following day, the guests sat down to dinner. The conversation of Radcliff lent a charm to the entertainment. On Mr. Reed and Jameston, he had resolved to make an impression ; an impression was made, and an opinion formed, of which Mr. Radcliff Nesbit was little worthy.

“This would be a charming location for a boarding house, or good hotel, remarked Mr. Jameston, to spend a few weeks, away from the bustle of the city, yet in the neighborhood of its call, would be very delightful.”

“The Queen is the only hotel we have of any repute,” observed Mrs. Nesbit ; “the Vulcan ought certainly to come under the cognizance of the law.”

Radcliff said nothing, but listened intently for his answer. Mr. Buck had so confidently asserted the wish of Mr. Jameston to become the husband of his daughter, that he could not doubt it, although it seemed incredible.

“It, or rather its proprietor, has several times come under its notice,” he replied, “but escaped. Three times he has been indicted for purloining horses from his boarders, but always manages to evade the law ; several times he has been to my office, to ask advice relative to making some property over to a daughter, whom he always brings with him ‘in order’ he said, ‘to secure it to her, as he was determined she should be a lady.’ It was in due form signed over, but as it is heavily

mortgaged, I do not think it would sell for any thing beyond it. The old gentleman seemed to wish to engage my services beyond my province, in recommending some nice young swain, he said for his Dollie—no, that is not quite the name—‘She’s very hard to please,’ he added, which you know, was rather discouraging information. I told him my talent did not lie in that line at all, and he must excuse my undertaking so important a case; the only advice I could give him on the subject was, that he had better leave the choice to the young lady herself. He seemed much confused and looked chagrined as he left the office; it did not occur to me at the time, but I verily believe the young Miss must have taken a fancy to the man who has the charge of my office, as he is a fine-looking fellow.”

“Had I known you had so fair a visitor Jameston,” said Mr. Reed, “I might have been tempted to make a call. You should have spoken a good word for some of us.”

“To confess the truth, Reed, the circumstance never entered my mind again, until Mrs. Nesbit mentioned the name of Buck.”

Buck, repeated Mr. Reed, it is a name I never heard; his hotel cannot be at all frequented.”

Never heard the name, thought Radcliff; the two pretended suitors. He shuddered when he thought of the fatal leap he was about taking. The subject was changed, and the current of Radcliff’s thought changed with it; he was again the centre. The fine woods surrounding Grangeville were spoken of, and the variety of fern, &c., canvassed.

“But how soon they will all be felled,” remarked Dr. Ruthven. “So near our city valuable timber is quite in demand.”

“Only the cedars are in danger here,” replied Mr. Lennox. “For a variety of purposes, whole forests of that wood have disappeared; my father, who was a cooper, told me that in one year he had manufactured

three miles of forest trees into casks, &c., and shipped them to various places."

A cooper! Cornelia caught the eye of Radcliff; the curl of that lip was not to be mistaken. A cooper! She heard no more, saw no more; her whip stood untouched before her. Mr. Lennox, utterly unconscious of his disgrace, went on describing the different variety of trees, their various hues, their strength, their comparative length of life, until the party became so much interested that they had to be reminded time was passing. Radcliff pleading a forgotten prior engagement, and politely proffering his gig to two of the gentlemen, retired to his own chamber, in a state of mind by no means enviable. "Oh! that I had spurned the puppy's offers," he murmured, as he writhed with mortification. "Did he make known the story, ruin and disgrace would follow. And Howard, how has he degraded me? In the view of the fashionable world, penniless! Then if Cornelia form a connection with a cooper. That were an everlasting disgrace. It must not be; I will prevent it if possible. Yes, yes, that matter can be arranged, I will appeal to Cornelia's pride; and Mr. Buck will not dare, and Mr. Laurette may consider the assertion only a lawyer's finesse." With a slight gleam of hope, he went to seek his sister.

"Nesbit," said Mr. Jameston, as he stepped into the carriage with Howard, "I must know more of that fine fellow, Mr. Lennox. I cannot tell when I have been so much pleased with a stranger. So well balanced a mind, you seldom see; and I did admire greatly his independence. 'My father was a cooper.' It spoke volumes for him; but I have heard his story, it was a curious one. His grandfather was a highly educated man, but very eccentric. He had a large landed wood estate, of course not available. After some consideration as to the best method of increasing his income he decided, after giving his son a thorough mercantile education, to have him taught the trade of a cooper. When he was sixteen years of age, he

engaged an experienced workman as a private tutor, for four hours in the day, allowing him the first year, all the articles made. At the close of the third, his son was competent to undertake the business. Forests were soon cleared, and a handsome property accumulated, which Mr. Henry Lennox is now enjoying."

"A novel method of learning a trade," said Howard laughing.

"Yes, it shows singularity, but much originality, and a vast amount of independence. That trait of the grandfather shines forth conspicuously in his descendant. Your sister, in her connection with Mr. Lennox, will be an exception to a general rule that where beauty calls forth universal admiration, the possessor is seldom happy in her choice."

"Come, gentlemen," shouted Mr. Reed, who, with Mr. Lennox was almost out of sight, "do not lag as though the sun would be put back for us. Come, take a peep at his majesty; it is a sight worth beholding."

The delinquents hastened their pace, and in a few moments found themselves on a lofty eminence commanding a view for miles around. The sun was just above the horizon, and its brilliant hues had tinged the clouds as far as the eye could reach. From the brightest orange to the most delicate straw, from the deepest scarlet to the faintest blush, not a shade was wanting; the floating vapor, changing its hue continually to every tint of the rainbow, sometimes gaudy, at others surpassing the most delicate touch of the artist. All stood silently gazing upon nature's scene before them. Hill upon hill stretched far into the distance, reaching almost to mountain height, here and there, studded with country seats, which seemed to be thrown among them. A beautiful stream glided silently along at their feet, which spread its little branches, enriching the soil in every direction.

"With such a scene presented to my eye," remarked Mr. Lennox, "I need not revelation to read the power, the wisdom, the benevolence of my Creator

his loving kindness is so made visible to my mind, that my heart is so fully attuned to praise, I with difficulty restrain its breaking forth into songs of thanksgiving."

"And could we find a more appropriate place," enquired Mr. Reed, "than where God's voice is so gloriously uttered forth?"

The deep-toned voice of Howard was now heard in a song of praise; and the strong base of Mr. Jameston, mingled with the flute-notes of Mr. Lennox, reverberating from hill to hill, was in entire unison with the prospect.

"How Mordecai would enjoy this scene," said Dr. Ruthven, as they descended the hill, and tied their horses to some trees, fronting a dense forest.

"Why did he not join us?" enquired Mr. Reed. "Has he had any recent affliction? I observed he was uncommonly grave and silent during dinner."

"Not recent: some time has elapsed since the death of his uncle, but he has never recovered his spirits. Dr. Lodi was an irreparable loss; the void could not be filled."

"It will be," observed Dr. Ruthven, "or Harry Ruthven is no prophet. That lighting of the eye and bright smile, conferred on no one else, when Miss Marion Nesbit is the speaker, foretells an occasion for a second disowning on the part of old Mr. Mordecai."

"That my sister never would permit," replied Howard, gravely.

"In such society," rejoined Mr. Jameston. "I marvel the old gentleman does not tremble for his son's orthodoxy."

There was no reply; and the party were soon lost to view in the dense mass of wood they entered.

After three hours' enjoyment through woods, and glens, and o'er hills and valleys, as they again emerged from the forest, the rays of the moon fell upon them, reminding them that tea was awaiting them at Major Nesbit's. Untying their horses, they set off in high spirits, and took the road to Grangeville. Dr. Ruth-

ven had resigned his horse to Mr. Reed, and accepted a seat beside Mr. Jameston; Howard and Mr. Lennox rode together.

"You seem fatigued, Howard," remarked Mr. Lennox, as they drew near home. "Is that the cause of your taciturnity?"

"Not in the slightest degree tired," he replied: "but I have been pondering the sentiment you expressed to-day. I was rejoiced, but much surprised, at your Christian views."

Mr. Lennox shook his head. "I unintentionally misled you, Nesbit; an enthusiastic admirer of nature, from Nature's works, my heart is bowed to Him who formed them. In every leaf I see His penciling; but in the Book, revealing Him as my crucified Redeemer, I feel but little interest, and take no pleasure, in perusing. I cannot realize my sinfulness, or my need of a personal application of the remedy."

Mr. Nesbit looked grieved. "I am sorely disappointed, Henry; but I confess, with your supposed views, I a little wondered at your selection of my sister."

"I am grateful for every gift of nature, Howard."

"Yes; you are revelling in the gifts of a munificent Creator, but reject a boon, in comparison with which, all others sink into insignificance: that offering made on Calvary; that offering which shrouded the earth in darkness, as with throes of anguish, which beggars all imagination, the spirit passed away, crying, 'It is finished.' Was not that scene fitted to excite your love and gratitude? Was there not, at least, enough of the sublime in nature? Rocks clove to their foundations; the heavens clothed in darkness; the vail of the temple rent in twain, and the earth trembling as an aspen leaf, as if in terror, at such a spectacle. Angels looked on, and wondered; the grave gave up its dead, and even the heathen centurion, with altered mien, confessed, 'Truly, this was the Son of God.'"

"For your faithfulness in speaking thus plainly, I thank you, Howard. Had I, like the disciple, been an

eye-witness of the sorrows of Gethsemene ; had I seen that form extended on the cross, and heard that piercing cry, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' my heart would have melted within me, and had I witnessed the convulsion of nature, in attestation of his divinity, I would, from that moment, have consecrated myself, body, soul, and spirit, to the service of my Redeemer."

"We have Moses and the Prophets," returned Howard, "if we believe them not, neither will we believe, though one rose from the dead. God grant, Lennox," he added with earnestness, "that you may take refuge under the shadow of that cross, ere he shall thrust in his sickle."

The carriage stopped, both entered in silence ; a few words only were whispered in the ear of Howard, "Pray for me."

The hissing urn welcomed the travellers, and the whole party gathered to partake of a light repast, ere they separated. Mr. Mordecai, had returned home. Radcliff and Cornelia, were absent also.

"Where is Miss Cornelia," enquired Mrs. Nesbit, of Hogan, who was standing behind her chair.

"Miss Cornelia, bid Susan say, Mrs. Nesbit, that she felt rather tired, and asked to be excused this evening."

Mrs. Nesbit, looked puzzled. "Is she sick?"

"Don't know, ma'am, Susan didn't say she was."

"Marion, will you go up, and enquire about your sister," said Mrs. Nesbit, "she must have some reason for absenting herself from table."

Fifteen minutes elapsed before Marion returned. She was alone. "Cornelia, asked to be excused, mamma," she said in a low tone. No further question was asked, and the gentleman arose, to take leave.

"At what time to-morrow, may we look for your sisters, Dr. Ruthven?" enquired Mrs. Nesbit.

"In the after part of the day, Mrs. Spencer, proposed sending the carriage for them."

"You will remind them their promise is for ten days."

"They will require no reminder ; they are looking forward to this visit with much pleasure."

"I will call and ride up with them, Dr. Ruthven," said Howard, "I shall not leave my office until four."

"As I have a patient to see at that hour, I would thank you to do so, Mr. Nesbit."

The bright smile that played upon the face of Howard, attested his sincerity, as he replied, "It will give me great pleasure."

The next morning, Cornelia, appeared in the dining-room, with a neatly folded paper in her hand. "Can Hogan be spared for a little while mamma ? I want him to hand this note to Mr. Lennox."

"He shall be spared, Nellie ; Susan can take his place at the table. An apology is certainly due Mr. Lennox, for your neglect last evening."

"Fatigue was a sufficient plea, mamma, and I am sure the society of Dr. Ruthven, is sufficient to tire any one not gravity itself. His sisters and he are certainly cast in the same mould. They never laugh unless they are really amused, and never talk unless they have something to say ; no pleasant small talk, not a speck. When I expatiated the other day, on the beauty of a breastpin, Emilie only smiled, and said 'I wish for your sake, Nellie, I were more initiated, but a wax bead or pearl has to my eye, the same appearance.' Philip Spencer, pronounces them insufferable."

"I should think," replied Howard, as he drew on his gloves, and turned to leave the room, there would be as much sympathy between Miss Ruthven and Philip Spencer, as similarity of light to darkness."

"How, sharp, and disagreeable Howard has become of late," observed Cornelia, as her brother closed the front door. "I am sure if he were not my brother, he would tire me as much as Dr. Ruthven. I do wish he were a little more like Rad in some respects."

"Your complaints are of so novel a nature, daughter," said Major Nesbit, laughing, "that I fear you will obtain but little sympathy, and to your amendment in the character of Howard, I cannot subscribe."

"Why, papa, I heard Mr. Reed say to Mr. Jameston, as they went down the lawn, Radcliff Nesbit is one of the most finished gentlemen I have ever known."

"And did they add that Howard was not?"

"They made no remark upon him, but Rad certainly bears the palm in courtesy."

"At the sick bed of the poor, or seated in their hovels, which would be the most kind and courteous, Nellie?"

"Oh! that is not Rad's forte, papa; he would be quite out of his element."

"What a name Howard is gaining for himself at the bar!" observed Mrs Nesbit, to her husband.

"Yes, three important causes placed in his hands yesterday, to prepare for the court, which will sit in about a month."

Between four and five the guests arrived to dinner; in the evening, Mr. Jameston again joined their circle. "I felt privileged, Miss Cornelie," he remarked, "to accept Mrs. Nesbit's kind general invitation, as I was so unjustly deprived of your society last evening." A very courteous reply was given, and the gratified Miss Nesbit found Mr. Jameston far more agreeable than at first she had supposed him; his vehicle was freely offered for the accomodation of the ladies, and a daily visit led to some surmises on the part of Miss Cornelie. His attention to her was certainly quite marked, it must mean something; her heart bounded at the thought. The rich, the aristocratic Mr. Jameston at her offer; what a position would she hold. Mr. Lennox, was forgotten, absolutely forgotten. He was as though he had never been.

The last day of the Miss Ruthvens' visit had arrived, Mr. Jameston called late: the family were all riding but Cornelie, she was alone. "Will you not take a short drive Miss Nesbit," he enquired, "the country is unusually inviting this afternoon."

Cornelia assented, and they were soon winding along the edge of a river under the thick shade of chestnut trees.

"Happy is the man whose lot is cast in the country," he remarked.

"I cannot agree with you, Mr. Jameston," she replied, "for permanency, I should prefer a city residence."

"Is it possible, I am disappointed; I supposed in that we should agree in sentiment. My cottage is now building among the hills of Grangeville, but the prospect of occupying it is very future."

"In what direction," enquired Cornelia, her heart palpitating almost audibly.

"About a mile northwest of you."

"Not that palace!" exclaimed Cornelia, "I enquired who was building it; but could not learn."

"In that cottage or palace, call it what you will, Miss Nesbit, I hope—" he hesitated. The brief acquaintance flitted through her mind, but the position and wealth of Mr. Jameston soon placed that difficulty out of view. To be mistress of such a mansion! Mr. Jameston continued: "But I must yet wait some time ere I can hope to place a mistress in it, as Emilie positively refuses to leave her mother in her declining health. The country air does not agree with Mrs. Ruthven."

The brain of Cornelia reeled. Were all her pleasant visions at an end? Sick with disappointment, she could scarcely lift her head. With a great effort she said, with assumed calmness, "I was not aware of the engagement, Mr. Jameston."

"It has existed for two years, but has been deferred from time to time, in consequence of the ill health of Mrs. Ruthven. When we can make an arrangement, we shall have you as a near neighbor."

"Rather more than a mile," was the reply. "Yes, your father's; but Mr. Lennox is within one square, and with a few such spirits, I shall care little for other society."

"Mr. Lennox!" repeated Cornelia, scarcely knowing what she said.

"Pardon me, Miss Nesbit, if I have taken undue

liberty in mentioning your engagement so freely; but knowing it was announced long since, I did not hesitate."

"Not at all, sir; not at all. It is nothing; he is nothing. I should prefer returning home, Mr. Jameston."

"Certainly, Miss Nesbit," he said, turning the horse's head; "I fear you are unwell."

"My head aches slightly, it will be better when it rests."

She alighted at the door, and Mr. Jameston supposing she would wish to be quiet, considerately left her, and went to join the returning party.

With what feelings did Cornelia await them. Disappointment and envy filled her bosom. Her mind again reverted to Mr. Lennox. She had acted hastily, at Radcliff's suggestion, given him a decided rejection, on the plea of the discovery of want of affection. He was gone not to be recalled; although by Mr. Jameston considered entitled to rank among his friends; and wealthy. She was not aware how wealthy, until Mr. Reed, the evening previous, spoke of his large estate, valued at three hundred thousand dollars. "What have I not lost. It is all Radcliff's doings. I should never have proceeded so far, had he not urged me so vehemently."

At this moment Major Nesbit entered. "I am glad, at length, to see you alone, Cornelia," he said, seating himself beside her. "What has become of Henry Lennox?"

"He does not visit me any longer, papa," she answered, tremulously.

"Of that, I am fully aware, but the cause remains a mystery.

"Do not speak of him, papa, please do not; I desire to forget him altogether."

"Has he trifled with your affections, daughter?"

"I cannot tell you anything about it, only please do not speak or think of him again."

"I will both think and speak of him again, daugh-

ter. Mr. Lennox must not trifle, with impunity, with me or mine. I will sift it to the foundation." As he spoke, he arose quickly, and before Cornelia could interpose, he left the room.

In a few moments a number of voices, proceeding from the piazza, told Cornelia the party had arrived, and assuming all the calmness possible, she went forward to meet them. "Where is Howard?" she enquired, observing he was not with them.

"Your father met him at the gate; they have gone down the lane together."

"Down the lane?" she enquired, with a feeling of relief.

"Not towards the city; in the other direction."

Major Nesbit called back, they had some little busines to transact, which would probably detain them about an hour. The paleness that overspread the face of Cornelia, could not escape observation. She said nothing, but suffered herself to be led by Marion into the library.

"Oh, Marion!" she exclaimed, with an impassioned flood of tears, "I am undone; papa has gone to see Mr. Lennox; he will hear all; know all."

"Know what, dear Nellie?" enquired Marion, alarmed at the agitation of her sister.

"The contents of Radcliff's note; he composed it; fearing, he said, I would not do the thing effectuallly. I penned it, and it has my signature."

"What is its purport?"

"I am ashamed to say, but Radcliff was so shocked at the thought of his cooper blood, that he persuaded me to dismiss him at once. He said that the gentlemen dining with us, and all whose opinions were worth consulting, would despise me for his sake."

"That was indeed a mistake, but if it were true, it does not justify you for a moment, Cornelia; Mr. Lennox dined last week with both Mr. Jameston and Reed and your father; permitting his addresses was a sufficient guarrantee of his respectability. The blind

has been guided by the blind, in this instance and both have stumbled and fallen."

"But what am I to do Marion," she enquired, wringing her hands in agony. "From papa, there is no escaping; he will never forgive me. I am sure I am very sorry, and would rejoice to be on terms again with Henry. I thought of a note of apology."

"You must now await their return, Nellie; meantime if you cannot regain composure, retire to your own room, and avoid observation." She did so, and Marion returned to the piazza.

We will now follow Major Nesbit and Howard, for a few moments, to the house of Mr. Lennox. The gentlemen were shown into the parlor where he was sitting. "Major Nesbit," he said, rising, and bowing very gravely; "I am happy to see you, sir, but scarcely expected a visit from you, or Mr. Nesbit, after all that has occurred between us."

"The object of our call, sir," replied, Major Nesbit, "is to ascertain the truth, as we can obtain no information from any other source."

"I should judge that silence would be the only source either Miss Nesbit, or her brother Radcliff, would wish to pursue, and I desire also to forget the authors of such epistles as these." As he spoke, he drew two notes from a drawer of his secretary, and placed them in the hands of Major Nesbit. I received one from each party mentioned; make what use of them you think proper. I never wish them returned, and positively decline any further communication upon the subject."

"Lennox," said Howard, laying his hand upon his shoulder, "you forget, that to us, you stand in the light of one who has trifled with a daughter and sister, near and dear to us."

"Howard Nesbit," he replied, calmly releasing himself from the hand that held him, "Henry Lennox is no trifler. Read those papers on your return home, and say then who trifled, and worse than trifled."

"We will step into the adjoining wood, Howard,"

said Major Nesbit, when they had taken leave of Mr. Lennox, "and learn the contents. I tremble at what they may unfold. In Radcliff I place little confidence."

The wood was reached, and the first paper, signed by Cornelia, opened. He read it to the end in perfect silence. She found her supposed affection was mere infatuation, and desired to be released from a promise thoughtlessly given. She speaks of ill-assorted marriages producing much unhappiness, and an equality of position being always desirable. "You can read it, Howard," said his father, handing him the note. "Judge for yourself whether the counsel of her brother is not apparent."

The second note was then read also, carefully and deliberately. His eye flashed as he proceeded. "'Entire inequality of rank—ignoble birth—springing from a race of *les parvenus*.' How has the proud Radcliff Nesbit degraded his sister and himself!" remarked Major Nesbit, as he placed this note also in the hands of his son. "He has manner, but not one particle of true refinement. Such a note, to one of our most respectable citizens,—his father and grandfather men of note, the élite of the village!—it is an insult for which Radcliff shall apologise to Mr. Lennox. All intercourse between his father and himself shall cease, until he write a proper acknowledgment for his unprecedented conduct."

The guests were awaiting the return of the gentlemen to take leave. Howard accompanied them as far as Mr. Houston's, where he remained during the evening. Marion went to her sister's chamber. Radcliff, after seeing the guests to the end of the lawn, returned to take his hat, when he was summoned to the library by his father.

"Did you require me for anything of importance, father?" he enquired. "I have quite a pressing engagement."

"I do require you, Radcliff, and can have no engagement interfere. A seat, sir, and your whole attention."

Radcliff sat down.

"You will understand me, when I tell you I have had an explanation with our injured friend, Mr. Lennox."

Radcliff started.

"He placed in my hand two notes;—with their purport you are fully acquainted. The light in which you stand in my estimation is this,—you have insulted one of the most highly esteemed gentlemen of Grangeville, blasted the fair prospects of your sister, and brought disgrace upon every member of your family."

"As to the respectability of Mr. Lennox," replied Radcliff, haughtily, "you and I differ, father. Connexion with a cooper would have been a lasting disgrace, in my opinion."

"I have now said all that I intend upon the subject, Radcliff. I have expressed to you my sentiments, but, until you see very differently, and make either a verbal or written acknowledgment to Mr. Lennox, you and I are as strangers."

"Father!"

"That is my decision."

"It is impossible I should ever obey such a mandate."

"Then, you know the penalty, sir," replied Major Nesbit, rising.

"Stay, father. Am I not to hold communication with you on any subject?"

Major Nesbit made no reply, but slowly left the apartment. Radcliff, muttering, "Despotic, tyrannical," took his hat, and hastily proceeded down the lawn.

Three, four, six weeks passed; Radcliff regularly took his seat at table in silence; the consciousness of his father's displeasure weighed heavily upon him; he was the only being in the world for whom he had decided respect; but, to confess himself wrong, was contrary to Radcliff's nature, and could not be brooked.

The state of Cornelia's mind had produced fever, and the evening for the long-expected wedding arrived, finding her unable to leave her pillow. It had been delayed six or eight months after the time appointed, from

some unforeseen causes. The cards of invitation came the week before.

"Howard Nesbit, groomsman!" exclaimed Radcliff; "why, I did not think that honor would be conferred on any of the house of Nesbit. How is it, Howard, that you are the favored one, while I am only a guest?"

Howard smiled. "It is not impossible, Radcliff, at some future time, there may be a somewhat closer tie formed between the houses of Ruthven and Nesbit."

"No! not Emilie Ruthven?"

"That could not be," replied Howard, laughing, "unless as a widow, in case of Jameston's death."

"Jameston! I thought his attentions were marked to Cornelia."

"Only marked, as the affianced of his now intimate friend, Lennox."

Radcliff crimsoned.

"I shall marry none—of that be assured, Radcliff—until a full competency is settled upon our parents; then, of the white cottage upon the hill, next our home, which I have purchased, Julia Ruthven has promised to become the mistress."

"How people can throw themselves away," said Radcliff, petulently, when Howard left the room.

"Julia Ruthven is my beau-ideal of all a wife should be to make a man happy," replied Miss Houston; "your father loved her almost as a daughter, before he was aware of the interest your brother felt for her. Their devotion to their invalid mother, shows them in their true light."

A contemptuous smile was the only reply, and Radcliff left the room.

The glare of light almost blinded Marion, as on the night of the wedding, she, with her two brothers, accompanied Mr. Mordecai, entered the drawing-room of Mr. Spencer. A group of gentlemen were standing at the extreme end of the room, one of whom appeared to be the centre of attraction. His back was toward them, and he was conversing with great earnestness.

"Who can he be?" whispered Radcliff.

Mr. Reed, who formed one of the little circle, saw them enter, and advanced to meet them.

"We groomsmen, Mr. Nesbit," he said pleasantly, "are all awaiting your arrival. The gentlemen in that corner are to be the prominent actors, always excepting the groom, of course; if any are strangers to you, allow me the pleasure of introducing you."

"All groomsmen!" exclaimed Radcliff.

"A select few; only eight of us. Seventy invited guests to the wedding, and five hundred to the reception. Dr. Ruthven has made one unfortunate selection. Lennox is so agreeable, yea, I may say so fascinating, that I am afraid we shall forget our duty."

Lennox! Could it be!—the despised cooper's son a groomsman in the house of Mr. Spencer, and an admired friend of Reed and Jameston. He had indeed mistaken his position. It was too late to recall him, but he would endeavor to atone, as far as possible; he would write immediately, say to him he had been misinformed; he had heard his morality, &c., was questioned, and wishing to save his sister from an unhappy connexion, he had pursued the only means occurring to him to release her from the engagement. To be sure, this was all untrue, but a reconciliation must be produced. By keeping at a distance from the bridal party, he managed to kill a portion of the evening, but retired early to fulfil his determination of making an humble apology to Mr. Lennox. It was written, sealed, and sent, the messenger delivering it into the hands of Mr. Lennox on the following morning. What impression it made upon him, Radcliff was not informed, as no notice was ever taken of it or its writer, but as its contents were repeated to Major Nesbit, with some omissions and slight alterations, he had the satisfaction of being once more on terms with him, and could again converse freely on any subject in his presence.

The evening passed delightfully, and Marion was scarcely conscious of its flight, when the carriage was announced by Howard as being ready for their return

home. They were in the midst of new scenes ; scenes in which they would not care often to mingle ; but the very novelty lent a charm that fascinated them. There was much pleasant conversation, in which even Mr. Mordecai, by the side of Marion, joined freely. The only passing cloud which Howard noticed, was on the brow of Mr. Reed, when, as they were taking leave, he, in a low voice, enquired if there were any foundation for the remark of Harry Ruthven some time since, in regard to Mr. Mordecai and Miss Nesbit. Mr. Nesbit bowed affirmatively.

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### CHAPTER XIII.

“Discretion guide thee on thy way,  
Nobly-minded youth ;  
Whisper thee thou art weakness,  
Though thy cause be strength.”

ANXIOUSLY did Mr. Mordecai observe the declining health of his father ; his faltering step and trembling hands were evidences not to be mistaken.

“Do you not see a change in my father ?” he enquired of Marion one day, as he watched him walking in the garden with Major Nesbit.

“A very decided one, Lemuel ; his sun is evidently setting. Will you still withhold from him the good tidings of great joy, revealed to you by the spirit of God ?”

“What would it avail, Marion ? It would only bring his anathema upon me, and render us both the most miserable of men ; he could not retain me near him, and who, oh ! who would watch over him in his last moments ? My way is pent up before me ; He whom I now know to be the “Hope of Israel, the long-looked for Messiah, is to him a stumbling block, a rock of

offence. I dare not offer him the only hope of salvation."

"Where is your faith, Lemuel? Do you limit the power of the sovereign God? Did you not formerly view the Messiah as only of Nazareth? And when the eyes of your sister were opened, and she professed Christ and Him crucified, did you not deem it an act displeasing to the God of Israel? Believe me, Lemuel, whether he hear or forbear, it is your duty to proclaim the truth, to tell him of the Saviour you have found."

Mr. Mordecai shook his head mournfully.

"Miriam took that step, and only increased his hatred to Him whom he termed the Nazarene."

The entrance of Mr. Mordecai leaning upon the arm of Major Nesbit, arrested the conversation. "It is quite time, Lemuel," he remarked, "that we were starting for home. Twelve miles was a short distance formerly, but we must now drive slowly, as I cannot bear much fatigue."

"I am at your service, father, whenever you think proper."

"Of that I am fully convinced, my dear boy; no parent ever leaned upon a firmer staff."

"Nevertheless, he is but a broken reed, Mr. Mordecai," remarked Marion; "how easily human affections are severed. Do you think we ever find true happiness in seeking objects only temporal?"

"Yes, if our minds are attuned alike; if there be no severing of the natural tie by some step that breaks the heart and forces separation, which brings down our gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. Far better to see its clay tenement resting in its burial place until the resurrection morn." A tear stole down the cheek of the old man as he spoke, but it was immediately brushed away and succeeded by an expression that manifested only bitterness of spirit. It was an unhallowed look, not softened by the love of Jesus

"The barouche is waiting, father," observed young Mordecai, placing the arm of the old gentleman kindly in his own, "and I fear the night air for you."

Leaning upon the proffered arm, he slowly proceeded to the carriage, and evidently forgetful of the presence of Major Nesbit, he threw himself upon the seat and buried his face in his handkerchief. Pressing the hand of his friend, without speaking, Lemuel seated himself beside him, and they silently pursued their way to Rocklyn.

Week after week rolled by, the weakness of Mr. Mr. Mordecai increasing daily; he was no longer able to leave his chamber, but reclined upon the couch through the day. His son was his constant companion, watching beside him, and anticipating every want; but on the subject nearest his heart he was silent. There were few friends admitted, for since the death of Dr. Lodi, he had withdrawn himself from the world, and cared little for society. Days and nights wore away wearily; his life was evidently drawing to a close; his physician gave little hope. The soul of Lemuel was bowed with grief that he dared not offer him the only present consolation, and the only hope of future happiness. The dawn always found him upon his knees in a small room adjoining the one in which his father slept, pleading with his Saviour that the last moments of his dear parent might be enlightened by the Holy Spirit, and that he might be shown the true Messiah. In one of these seasons, when wrestling with his Maker, he heard his father feebly call the name of Lemuel. Rising, he went immediately to his bedside.

"My son," he said, taking his hand in his, "sit beside me, while I talk with you."

Lemuel obeyed, drawing a chair very closely. "How have you rested, father? You seemed rather restless last night."

"I have slept but little, Lemuel; my mind is ill at ease, being filled with gloomy forebodings. When I view God, it is only as seen upon the Mount by the rebellious Israelites in the wilderness. I have always adored the God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Jacob. I have taken as my guide the precepts given to Moses on Sinai. I have endeavored to keep the ceremonial law

as far as possible. I have fasted, and prayed, and wept,—wept for my nation, whose harp is still hung upon the willow. I felt, while in health, as one of the favored of God, and was living in the light of his countenance; but now, alas! alas! I am ready to cry with the Prophet, 'Woe is me, for I am undone!' My soul is enveloped in darkness,—thick darkness; darkness that may be felt. Can you, my son, offer me any comfort?"

"Is there not a day's Man, dear father, that can lay his hand upon both?"

"Yes,—yes. There is indeed a promised Messiah, but he is hidden for our sins. Where shall we look for him?"

"Is he not promised before the sceptre of Judah shall be broken?"

"Certainly he is, by one who never promises in vain, It is a thing we cannot fathom."

"Who is alluded to in Isaiah, as taken from prison, and from judgment; who stood before his judge as meekly as a sheep before his shearers? How do you interpret the whole of the 53d chapter of Isaiah, father?"

"I confess I know not. Light is thrown on prophecy only by its fulfilment. The Gentiles bring down those passages to meet their own views, and pervert them to answer their vile purposes."

"They believe that the Messiah, the Hope of Israel, and the Anointed of the Lord, are all centred in the Babe of Bethlehem. May they not have some foundation for their belief?"

The old man started: "Do you ask, Lemuel, if that impostor is the Messiah?"

"Have you ever examined the New Testament, father?"

"Never! I never did, neither will allow my mind to be sullied by its baneful influence. Have you perused it, my son?"

The head of Lemuel sank upon the bed, as he answered in the lowest tone, "I have accepted that offered Saviour, dearest father; Jesus of Nazareth is our long

lost Messiah ; he whom the Lord has set upon his holy hill of Zion, and of whom he has said,—‘Thou art my Son ; this day have I begotten thee.’ He is your only hope, dear father—the hope of Israel. Believe me, out of Christ, you will always find God a consuming fire. Oh ! Will you not accept Him ? Give him your heart, your whole heart, before it is too late—before you appear at his judgment-seat ?” His feelings completely overcame him—he wept.

For some moments, Mr. Mordecai lay perfectly silent ; astonishment and grief seemed to have paralyzed him. Then making a great effort, he raised himself in the bed, and clasping his hands in agony, cried out, “Let Ichabod be written upon my house, for truly, its glory has departed.” Sinking back upon his pillow, there was a convulsive shudder through his frame, his arm fell lifeless by his side—the spirit had fled, leaving only the clay tenement in the arms of Lemuel, who raising him, endeavored in vain to restore life. Several physicians arrived, as the servants ran in quest of them in all directions, but life was so entirely extinct, that all effort proved unavailing, and Lemuel, accepting the offer of Dr. Rutledge, to give any necessary directions, retired to his chamber, and closed his door upon all human intercourse. Who can estimate the anguish of a spirit, bereft of one of the dearest objects of its affections, without hope of a future reunion. Crushed hopes, and an accusing conscience, whispering neglect of duty, goaded him almost to madness. Throwing himself upon his knees, for hours he remained with his head buried in a cushion. Hearing the door gently open, he turned, and Miriam stood before him. He arose, but unable to speak, he placed his arm around her, and leading her to the ottoman, seated himself beside her. His sister was the first to break the silence. “Do you forget our strong Tower, Lemuel—our Rock, our Deliverer, our Fortress ? Has He not promised to be with us through the deepest waters ? even through the valley of the shadow of death ?”

"Our Rock, Miriam, but not our father's stronghold. On what foundation did he rest? Oh! that I had been more faithful; that I had told him sooner of the Saviour I had found."

"It would have required great faith, Lemuel, with my experience before you. Even the love he bore an only daughter, was quenched in hatred of the Man of Nazareth. Do not write bitter things against yourself. He would only have spurned you from his presence, and suffered and died alone. God, is a God of mercy."

"But a God of judgment, also," replied Lemuel, clasping his hands in agony, "surely he has mercy on whom he will have mercy! Why is it, that I should be chosen, and my father, far better by nature, left."

"Hold! Lemuel, say not left. No! no! no!" and burying her face in her hands, she sobbed aloud. "Often have I spent whole nights in prayer for him and you, since my conversion. Were you not given to my supplication? But I must leave you, my dearest brother; I must not yet be seen here. It would require your presence to keep me from insult, in the midst of our Jewish relatives, who will soon assemble here."

Lemuel fixed his eyes upon the beautiful being before him; his countenance assumed a look of sternness foreign to his nature. "Who would have the temerity to insult Miriam Mordecai under this roof? Remain with me, dear sister, I need your counsel and support.

Abraham appeared at the door to announce Rabbi Leyden, who followed immediately after. He started on seeing Miriam seated familiarly beside her brother; and, bowing coldly, declined the proffered chair. With a scornful glance at Mrs. Ryers, he turned to Mr. Mordecai, and said, "Is the mansion of the venerated dead to be polluted with the footsteps of an apostate? Is the hand of a Gentile, a renegade from the faith of her fathers, to mingle her lamentations with ours on this solemn day?"

Mr. Mordecai arose, and with flashing eye, was about

to answer, when Miriam slowly advanced, and laying her hand gently on his arm, whispered, "Refrain, Lemuel, for my sake, refrain; let your avowal be deferred until a more seasonable moment." Then approaching the Rabbi, in a deeply solemn tone, she replied, "Beware, Rabbi Leyden, how you contemn the Lord God, merciful and gracious, slow to anger and of great compassion, else my beloved people would long since have been destroyed, for their obstinate resistance of the teachings of the Holy Spirit; in refusing to accept in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, their great High Priest, their Mighty Counsellor, their Prince of Peace. He is the promised Messiah; He the Lamb whose blood was shed for the remission of my sins, of your sins, and of those of the Jewish and Gentile race who desire to have their robes washed in the blood of the Lamb, and stand cleansed before the throne of the Almighty."

She ceased speaking, and coolly resumed her seat beside her brother. Her countenance was radiant; and, as Mr. Mordecai looked upon her, he almost wondered whether he were not in the presence of some angelic being. Rabbi Leyden stood transfixed, mute with astonishment and rage, and glaring upon her with a scowl, that never could have been mistaken for angelic, he darted from the room, was out of sight in a moment of time, not heeding the calls of Mr. Joshua Mordecai, who had just arrived, being notified by the telegraph of the death of his brother.

"I will take possession of my own chamber, if you please, Lemuel," said Mrs. Ryers; "scenes like these are not fitting such an hour, and they will be of constant recurrence."

"Use your own judgment, Miriam; you, indeed, make me feel my own littleness. Oh! for your undaunted courage; your faith; your love to our blessed Master. Had I possessed it, perhaps my father had now,—he stopped, agitation not permitting him to proceed,—but do not, for my sake, remain here; return home until the last rites are performed. You are right, I could not prevent the harshness of the Rabbi; and I fear, under

similar circumstances, I should not manifest your Christian spirit. I hear the step of Howard Nesbit, I could not find a more sympathizing friend; give yourself no uneasiness concerning me."

The carriage was ordered, and Mrs. Ryers, leaving her brother with Mr. Nesbit, returned to her own home.

The relatives of Mr. Mordecai, desirous of paying respect to so important a member of the family, came from their distant homes to witness the last rites, and the house was filled with those almost strangers to his son. The two brothers, by the request of Lemuel, took the sole direction of the funeral, and he remained in his chamber, shut out from general society. Howard Nesbit was his constant companion, and was unremitting in his endeavors to mitigate his grief. The visit of Mr. Houston, too, was a balm to his wounded spirit; and his kind blessing at parting seemed, for a time, to assuage his sorrow. A word also of sympathy from Marion's pen was received daily; and the written intercourse with Mr. Ryers and Miriam relieved that feeling of desolation, which, during his separation from his sister, he had fully experienced.

Four days intervened between the death and burial of Mr. Mordecai. Some relatives from a distance were yet absent. At length the day arrived, and the body was exposed to view, clothed in the habiliments of regal splendor. The coffin was covered with purple velvet, bound with silver, with a narrow wreath of silver cord embroidered beneath it. The plate upon the lid nearly covered it. Under the name there were various devices, signifying his devotion to the faith of his fathers.

Invitations were sent to gentlemen, far and near, with a request that all should wear mourning for the day. A concourse assembled; many came from motives of curiosity, and the sable dress was little consistent with their bright countenances and unrestrained conversation while conveying him to his long home.

Every private carriage for ten miles round, was put in requisition, and filled with the gentry of the place. In a close carriage, immediately after Rabbi Leyden.

Lemuel rode alone. Those fond of pomp and display, pronounced it most imposing; the thinking mind, was silent, not being able to pass encomium, and unwilling to censure what was intended as honor to the rich man's money. The whole scene might have brought to remembrance in the mind of some, the burial of the one whose crumbs sustained the mendicant at his door.

The day has passed; the funeral with all its train has passed also, the silent tomb encloses the body. The mansion which he had occupied, is clothed in mourning; the bowed shutters and sable streamers attest the outward respect at least of the living for the departed.

The morrow was appointed for the reading of the will. Rabbi Leyden was the only one present not allied by blood to the deceased. Mr. Mordecai most reluctantly took his seat among them in the library. There was no feigned interest now; all built hopes that might, or might not be raised upon a foundation of sand. All, save Lemuel, whose thoughts seemed to be far away from the present scene, looked anxiously towards Mr. Nathan Mordecai, as he carefully unfolded the seal, and slowly opened the parchment. The preliminaries were long and tedious; as he advanced, Lemuel became interested and listened attentively. His property amounted to eleven hundred thousand dollars. The two Mr. Mordicais, in conjunction with Lemuel, were to assume the executorship. One hundred thousand dollars, was to be placed at the disposal of Rabbi Leyden, for the erection of synagogues, in various parts of the country. Ten thousand through the same hand, for the indigent Hebrews at Jerusalem, and forty thousand as a token of gratitude to Rabbi Leyden. The silence was breathless, as he proceeded. Five thousand to Mrs. Nesbit, the same sum to Miss Harriet Houston as kind remembrances. The brow of the reader darkened, and a look of bitter disappointment followed, as he read. Forty thousand to each of my brothers, and one hundred and twenty to be divided equally among my twelve nieces and nephews.

"Have you not mistaken the sum named, uncle?" enquired Joshua Moses, a sister's son.

The figures were scanned closely by Mr. Mordecai; and the paper handed to the enquirer, "It is very clearly written, Joshua." After due examination, it was returned, with an expression of chagrin, saying in a low voice, "Ten thousand dollars is a pittance indeed."

Lemuel sat, with one arm resting on the table, patiently waiting the close. "You will please finish the reading," said Mr. Mordecai, almost throwing the will to him, "Rabbi Leyden, it seems to concern you far more than his almost forgotten relatives."

The Rabbi bowed pleasantly, took the paper and proceeded: "Three thousand dollars to be given to Abraham, my faithful domestic. One thousand to each of my other six servants. Three thousand to Mrs. Josephs, my housekeeper. The residue of my estate, to revert to my son Lemuel, and the house I desire he will occupy, if in accordance with his wishes. I give my broad lands to my dear son, he added, with my richest blessings, always with this proviso, that he remain in the faith of Israel, a Hebrew of the Hebrews. An apostacy I do not fear; but should it occur, I must only say amen, to the fiat of our law. 'Let him be anathema, maranatha.' Should such a calamity befall me, my property must go from him, and be divided equally among my nearest relatives, who have not swerved from the religion of my fathers." As he concluded, Lemuel, who was a close observer, detected an anxious glance cast on young Naphtali Mordecai, as with assumed indifference, the Rabbi refolded the paper, and returned it. The eye of Lemuel was immediately directed toward his cousin.

"You and I have had but little intercourse, cousin Lemuel," he remarked, "since I have been a guest here, I knew there could be no fellowship of sentiment, therefore, sought not your society; but I feel this occasion a fitting opportunity to declare myself a follower of the Nazarene." His father sprang from his seat. "Nay, father," he continued, laying his hand

gently upon his shoulder, "interrupt me not in my present duty; I know what penalty I incur by this confession; that has been long and prayerfully considered, but I have now a communication to make of another nature. Lemuel Mordecai, that will was indited by Rabbi Leyden; the information comes, perhaps, too late, but my informant is Mrs. Josephs; she this morning unburdened a guilty, or rather a bigoted conscience to me, and has given me permission to mention her as my authority." The eye of the young man turned sternly upon the Rabbi, as he enquired, "Do you deny the charge Rabbi Leyden?"

"I do, and defy a host of listeners and spies, to malign my actions."

"I am aware of your advantage, sir, in being under the roof of one, who would consider me an outcast, and my evidence, scarcely worthy of belief; but I will do my part, cousin Lemuel, towards opening your eyes to one, who does not honor his profession, whether Jewish or Christian."

"An apostate, from the true faith!" cried the Rabbi, "Know you, you are exposing yourself to the law, temporal, as well as spiritual, by your wonderful developments?"

"In doing my duty, Rabbi Leyden, I will go forward fearlessly. The civil power cannot harm me; but it might avail my cousin Lemuel, were it not, that he is blindly guided by the spiritual. Would that he were, even as myself, bound only in the bonds of an everlasting covenant with his Redeemer."

"Naphtali! Naphtali!" interrupted his father, sternly.

The young man turned, with an expression of the warmest affection upon his parent. "My own dear father's name I shall ever revere, whatever may be the punishment he will inflict upon me; but, Jesus is my leader, Jesus is my friend, Jesus is my God. And now, I await your decision; on that subject, my conflict has been great indeed." As he spoke, his countenance seemed to beam with a heavenly light, but the great drops that stood upon his forehead, told how

great the struggle in severing natural ties. Parental feeling was yet glowing in the bosom of his father ; in silence, he wept long and bitterly.

The eye of Lemuel rested upon his cousin, Naphtali, in perfect admiration. He arose, as he finished speaking, and walked towards him. His stern, uncompromising countenance, his dark, flashing eye, his tall, dignified figure, as he stood beside him, with one foot advanced, presented a strong contrast to the gentle, though fearless fair-haired youth of twenty. "There is treachery in the camp," he said, fixing his eyes upon the Rabbi, "and judgment must overtake the guilty Achan ; but," he continued, turning to his cousin, "your fearless acknowledgment of your faith, this day, has read me a lesson long to be remembered. We serve the same Redeemer. I have sought Him in the shadows of evening ; you have proclaimed him upon the house top ; but I, will endeavor to make atonement, by hereafter consecrating my whole life to my Saviour, and proclaiming the good tidings of great joy among my own and other people."

"You are mad, Lemuel Mordecai," exclaimed his uncle. "Do you remember, your whole property is at stake."

"My father, has been unjustly influenced ; the will, I shall have thoroughly canvassed ; but far better is it, than possessing a royal diadem, to be an heir of glory, a joint heir with Christ, and sooner, far sooner, would I resign every worldly expectation, than the peace which the spirit of God imparts to a ransomed soul. And I would only say, to those who may receive my patrimony, and leave me portionless, that without a better inheritance, it will prove insufficient for the cravings of the immortal soul."

"He that sitteth in the Heavens, shall hold even the kings of the earth in derision, who set themselves against him," replied Rabbi Leyden, rising, and endeavoring to conceal his embarrassment by assuming a dignified air, left the apartment.

Lemuel leaned over, and spoke in a low tone to his

young cousin, who, bowing assent, immediately withdrew with him,

"If cousin Lemuel has become so rich by his new creed," remarked one of the young men, as the door closed upon them, "we may be quite satisfied with the exchange, as we shall certainly benefit by his great prosperity. I consider our portion, by far the most tangible."

This ebullition, was at once checked by one of the older gentlemen, who were studious in their observance of decorum; but there was an evident expression of satisfaction on the countenances of the whole group, with the exception of the parent of the young Christian.

The following day, all the members of the family returned to their homes, leaving the two Mr. Mordecais to settle the estate of their brother. Naphtali, at the pressing invitation of Lemuel, alone remained, the executors taking up their abode at a Hotel in the vicinity.

The will, was carefully examined by Howard Nesbit and the most eminent lawyers of Varastone; but there was not a flaw, and it was signed by two competent witnesses, both men of standing in Rocklyn. It was at length returned, with the candid opinion of the lawyers, that a suit would avail nothing. For the first time, Lemuel partially realized his situation; but it was not, until he received permission to withdraw as an executor, and a notification also, to leave the house in the space of one month, in order that it might be arranged for sale, that his eyes were entirely opened. As the conviction now arose in his mind, that his father's large estate was about passing from them forever; that those, bound in the closest bonds by natural ties, were to be deprived, even of a small living, while others, upon whom his father never cast a thought, were enriched, grief and indignation obtained the mastery. "This house is mine," he exclaimed, "by every right, none shall turn me from it. I will see Miriam, at once; she, at least is left me; but Marion! must I relinquish the hope of making her affluent? Nay, must I even sever a tie,

that has been my day-star through all troubles? Never! never! He pulled the bell violently; for a long time the summons was unanswered. At length, Abraham opened the door, his face swollen with weeping. "Tell David to prepare the carriage, Abraham, I require it immediately."

"The carriage, sir?"

"Yes, the double carriage."

Abraham shook his head, "It is gone sir," he replied, mournfully.

"Gone!"

"Yes, sir; sold by Mr. Mordecai; he said he had a good offer for it, and fifteen hundred dollars cash for Don and Juan, he therefore thought it desirable to accept it. David, poor fellow, it was tearing bone from bone, when they looked back, he said, so knowingly upon him."

"Did Mr. Mordecai dare?" he checked himself.

"He dares anything, Master Lemuel."

"Well, well, Abraham," he replied, turning from him to hide his emotion, "let one of the ponies be harnessed in my little carriage."

"All gone, sir, all gone. Sold to the first bidder, and the auctioneer has been through the house, taking an inventory of furniture, and making a valuation."

"Are you not dreaming, Abraham?" enquired his master, with unfeigned astonishment.

The head of the servant was again shaken. "No, sir, no. Would that it were a dream. The servants are all dismissed."

"Dismissed! Dismissed from my service?"

"No, sir; from the house. They were told, they had better secure places, as their master would not be able to retain them."

"Where is Mr. Mordecai?" he enquired, pale with indignation.

Abraham hesitated. "Do not subject yourself to insult, dear master. He is in the drawing-room, examining the paintings."

Without replying, Lemuel immediately went to seek

him. As he entered, Mr. Mordecai had removed a small fancy piece, executed by Miriam, from the wall, for closer inspection. "It is exquisite," he remarked, to his nephew, who stood beside him; an artist would consider that well worth the purchase." Lemuel, goaded almost to madness, sprang forward and seized the picture, saying, "At your peril, make merchandise of Miriam's master-piece."

Mr. Mordecai looked startled, but soon recovering himself, in a haughty tone, he enquired, "And who dare interfere with me, while pursuing my lawful calling?"

A look of contempt was the only reply, as Lemuel slowly placed in his pocket, several paintings from the same hand.

"You certainly have no cause of offence, Lemuel," he continued, speaking in a more gentle manner; "as executor, an onerous burden is imposed upon me. I have a duty to fulfil which does not admit my gratifying any of the kindly feelings of my nature. In its execution, I have experienced nothing but opposition and insult."

"From what source?" enquired Lemuel, coldly.

"Such impertinence from your servants, that I was obliged to dismiss them, and engage others to remain with me. I take the house and furniture at a valuation, and shall remove here next month. For a gardener, I shall have no necessity, as I will build upon the ground, and increase the value of my property."

"Injustice may have its triumph for a season," replied Lemuel, "but the cry of the oppressed will reach the ear of the Lord of Sabaoth."

"Injustice!" exclaimed his uncle. "Will you desert the banner of the Almighty, and ask him to place you under its protection? By your apostacy, you have deliberately relinquished all claim to our lenity, forfeited your inheritance, and cast yourself upon the world with the small sum bequeathed you by your mother. Those pictures must be restored, they are

recognized only as the property of Mr. Solomon Mordecai."

The eye of Lemuel flashed, as he replied, "Let the one who attempts to regain them, array himself in a panoply of mail, this arm must indeed be powerless, ere it shall be accomplished."

"The strength of the law may be found equal, even to the physical power of Mr. Lemuel Mordecai," rejoined the nephew.

Lemuel, casting a stern look upon him, replied, "Did I not serve a Master who inculcates the law of meekness, and at whose tribunal I must answer for all my deeds, a chastisement you richly deserve, would soon overtake you; but, if your eyes should ever be opened to the truth, as it is in Jesus, at the foot of the Cross, you will mourn in bitterness of spirit, your cold-hearted mercenary dealings." The youth quailed before the eye which was fixed steadily upon him. "And now, gentlemen," he added, "with me you hold no further communication. I refer you to Mr. Howard Nesbit, as my attorney; in regard to the small sum coming from my mother, he will not fail to see justice done to my sister and myself."

Without again glancing at either party, he closed the door, and returned to his own chamber. Abraham, who was awaiting him in the hall, slowly followed. His evident wish to address him was observed by Mr. Mordecai. "What is it, Abraham?" he enquired, as they entered the door together; "have you any thing you wish to say to me?"

"Yes, sir," he replied, with his eyes cast upon the floor; "I was thinking, Master Lemuel, that Mr. Mordecai had done a world for me, in giving me so good an education. It has made me quite independent without a cent. I need no more. The district school is offered me at seventy-five dollars a year, with board and washing. Until you need my services again, I will engage in it. Now, what I was going to say, sir, was this: if that three thousand you would only take, not from me, but of your own right, as your

father's money; I would gladly give up all title to it."

"Thank you, Abraham, thank you," he replied, somewhat excited. "I have no necessity for it; keep it; if you do not need it now, let it accumulate for a rainy day. Receive my blessing, Abraham, and may the heart of David also be opened to Gospel light."

"Ours is a queer religion, Master Lemuel, but Rabbi Leyden's ears are every where; he was fully aware of your new views, before Mr. Mordecai's will was made. I heard him say the day before to old Mr. Levi, 'Young Mordecai's sentiments are miserably unsound; treading closely in the footsteps of his uncle.' The day before the death of Mr. Mordecai, you know you went to see Mr. Ryers. While you were absent, the Rabbi, with the two witnesses and a lawyer came. Mrs. Josephs was present, but not observed. The will was made, almost altogether by the Rabbi, with the exception of a few legacies. To the latter clause, Mr. Mordecai made some objections, which were overruled, and the document duly signed and sealed. She says she sought an opportunity that night of telling you, but as she fears the Rabbi, I doubt the effort was great, as she kept it so closely until this morning, when too late to take any step in the matter. If I may make bold to say it, Master Lemuel, no good can come of such proceedings."

"God overrules all things for our good, if we place our trust in him. To-morrow I will leave here; I shall require your assistance now in packing. I desire to see you all in my chamber this evening. Should I once more have a house of my own, I shall require the services of some of my faithful domestics. You are my friend, Abraham; your talents and education fit you for a far better station than that you have recently filled. I cannot receive you again as a domestic, but shall always feel the greatest esteem for you."

Abraham grasped his master's offered hand, and with much emotion, replied, "Give me a place in your house once more, Master Lemuel. I shall be content to re-

main in a subordinate situation. Will you promise me, sir, it shall be so?"

Lemuel, much moved, only replied by a return of the warm pressure of his hand, and the servant, without again speaking, hastily left the apartment. Before retiring to rest, Mr. Mordecai made his arrangements to leave the house in the morning. Two large trunks were packed by Abraham, and a kind leave taken of all the old domestics.

On the following morning he arose early, and taking two small keys from his dressing-bureau, proceeded to his father's chamber. As he was about opening the door, a tall figure, wrapped in a large cloak, stood before him; "My orders, sir, are positive to permit none to enter these apartments."

"Your fidelity will not be put to the test," replied Mr. Mordecai, coldly, "as no permission will be requested."

The man silently drew back, evidently awed by his calm, dignified manner, and Lemuel entering, carefully locked the door. A secret spring was touched in a drawer, and several small packages placed in the pocket of Mr. Mordecai; a second was opened in the same manner. A number of rings, a miniature watch, and some small braids of hair, were also secured. A portion of the secretary was then carefully examined; the drawer was empty, with the exception of an envelope, directed to "Lemuel Mordecai." "My yearly allowance!" he exclaimed. "How providential at this time. It must have been here at least a month. Truly I may say, Jehovah Jireh!" On bended knee, beside the couch so lately occupied by his father, he was enabled to rise above the things of time and sense, and to realize that with the atoning blood of Jesus sprinkled upon his soul, even in the midst of all his worldly conflicts, he could find peace and joy in believing. "The hand is Thine, O Lord," he said, "be the instrument whom it may. Grant me meekness and patience to glorify Thy holy name before Thine enemies."

His prayer was heard, and Mr. Mordecai arose, feel-

ing that the Friend of sinners was a friend indeed,—a very present help in trouble. He had sought and found that peace that passeth all understanding, which the world could neither give nor take away.

As he again passed through the hall on his return to his own apartment, the guard came forward, and placed his hand upon his arm: "Pardon me, sir," he said, "but you must be aware that I am responsible for any articles removed from these chambers."

Mr. Mordecai gravely, though gently, replied, "Happy would it be for you, did your responsibility rest here, old man; your silvered hair attests to the downhill of life, and the hour is drawing near when you will be called to a fearful reckoning in the presence of the great I AM! Let me warn you that the eye of One who never slumbers is upon you, and for every deed throughout your long life, you will be held responsible." There was no reply, but the hand trembled as it was withdrawn, and Mr. Mordecai was suffered to pass unmolested.

"Let us have breakfast by eight o'clock, Abraham," he said; "by nine I must be on my way to Varastone." A deep sigh was the only reply, and the domestic withdrew to give his master's direction. While taking breakfast with Naphtali, Howard Nesbit entered. "I need no introduction to my young friend," he said, taking the hand of the youth kindly; "your note, yesterday, Lemuel, was a sufficient one, and brought me here at an early hour, fearing I should miss you. You and I must not be strangers, Mr. Mordecai; the bond of Christianity is a powerful link, and the object of my visit is to ask you to accept a home with us for the present. Although clouds and darkness now hover over us, to the Christian the golden hues will soon appear in view. For the future we will trust Him who has promised all things to those who seek first the kingdom of righteousness."

"God has indeed raised up a friend in my extremity," replied the young man. "My hope has been to obtain a situation through the influence of my cousin Lemuel."

"I have had application from a friend, for a junior clerk," said Howard, "the place I think is still open, but the compensation is only three hundred a year."

"I should feel it indeed a leading of Providence, could I obtain it, a token that the foretold golden border is about appearing," he added, with a forced smile.

They were interrupted by Abraham appearing at the door, equipped for travel. "The trunks are in the wagon, Master Lemuel, and in fifteen minutes time the cars start for Varastone."

"Fifteen minutes! a short notice indeed for a walk of a quarter of a mile to the cars. My valise, Abraham?"

"I have it, sir. We shall be in Varastone long before the baggage."

"We," said Mr. Mordecai, inquiringly.

"Yes, Master Lemuel, allow me to be with you, and wait upon you the last two weeks of your stay here, ere you leave for the seminary. I am in funds,—three months' wages being paid me three weeks since. Only grant me this favor."

"I shall rejoice to retain you with me, my faithful Abraham, but must be permitted to defray your expenses."

"Then you remove from me half the pleasure."

"Be it so, Abraham; pursue your own course."

"Is Miss Miriam there?" he enquired, in the lowest voice.

"She is."

"God bless her," were the only words heard by Lemuel, as he turned and entered into conversation with the gentlemen.

Naphtali accompanied Howard to his office to obtain the direction of Mr. Jones, the merchant who required a clerk, and Mr. Mordecai proceeded to the boarding-house of Mr. and Mrs. Ryers, where he proposed remaining a few weeks. A gentle tap at her chamber door was answered by his sister. His pallid appearance shocked her. He did not speak, but kissing her affectionately, seated himself beside a table, resting his

throbbing head upon his hand. The children, delighted at seeing their uncle, were about rushing toward him, but were arrested by a look from their mother, and a finger raised to silence them. Seating herself beside him, she remarked, "you have been ill, Ulie, your face betrays it. Was it right I should be kept in ignorance?"

"No, Miriam, not ill; my dear sister give yourself no unnecessary anxiety. Care and excitement has told upon my frame; I trusted I had been brought to submit to the Divine will, but when I saw you and those precious little ones, I fully realized my arm was powerless to sustain and comfort you, and I was for the moment overcome."

"Trust in the Lord, dear brother. Let us look at our present blessings. Have you not gained the affection of one of the noblest of women?"

"I feel that was a most selfish step, Miriam; I sought, and gained her affections, determining to make an avowal to my father, but fear of the consequence withheld me. She, who had become dearer to me than life, I sacrificed to my selfish purposes, I should have left her free, or independently led her to the altar at all sacrifices. But I feared to confess my Saviour, and He has shown me it is no light thing to trifle with His name."

"Would it not have been in consonance with your wishes, to call Marion by the name of wife; to have had your hearthstone gladdened by such a treasure?"

"The summit of all earthly bliss, and might have been accomplished."

"None but a Hebrew maiden would have found access to your father's heart or home. Again I say, trust in the Lord, Lemuel; you will yet be united to Marion Nesbit, and gladdened by her smile, you will no longer remember former sorrows. It may be delayed and probably will, but Marion looks forward with confident expectation to a happy termination."

"By your bright visions, Miriam, my heart is already cheered, and I shall enter on my duties, buoyed with the hope of a Church, and settlement fitted to make

Marion comfortable and happy. But I must leave you, dear sister, I have some little business to transact, and will dine to-day at Major Nesbit's."

"With us prospects are already brightening. This morning Mr. Ryers received a note from Professor Thornton, stating his intention of retiring from Rocklyn College, and offering to nominate him for the Chemical chair. Through uncle Lodi they became quite intimate, and by his influence, he may possibly obtain the situation. If so, we will have an income of fifteen hundred dollars. The rooms of Mrs. Douglas are still vacant, we will engage them, and retain a spare chamber," she added, smiling, "for a roving brother."

"A blessing must follow you, Miriam, even a worldly blessing," observed her brother, placing his arm affectionately around her, as he arose to leave the room, "and those children will be a mine of wealth to all of us." Kissing the children, and giving some directions to Abraham, he left them promising to return to tea.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

"Verily is the man a marvel,  
Whom truth can write a friend.  
There be few, O child of sensibility,  
Who deserve to have thy friendship."

MR. MORDECAI was not an unexpected guest at the house of Major Nesbit. Howard returned with his young friend earlier than was his wont. They, with Major and Mrs. Nesbit, awaited him in the library. Marion and the children were also there.

"Our two important guests create quite a sensation," remarked Radcliff, sneeringly, as Cornelia seated herself discontentedly, beside him on the piazza. "How long are we to be honored with our new inmate?"

"An invitation for an indefinite period," she returned, "depending upon success in business. Mamma, says when this dwelling was erected, a long time elapsed ere its name could be determined. I think 'House of Refuge' for sick and disowned Jews would now be an appropriate title."

"Deranged ones, also," returned her brother. "None but a madman would throw away such a fortune for the sake of slight difference of creed. Marion is a complete victim of this fanaticism."

"I suppose she will now break her engagement; she has no prospect whatever. And do you know Mr. Reed is at her offer? I heard Howard tell mamma so, when I was in the next room."

A stamp of the foot was the only reply.

"I think," continued Cornelia, "instead of being lauded to the skies for unselfishness, Marion is very selfish, preferring her own ideal happiness to the aggrandizement of the family. A connexion with Mr. Reed is so desirable; his sister, you know, is the reigning belle in Varastone."

"I wish he were at your offer, Nellie."

"My hand is no longer at my own disposal," she replied, coloring deeply, and speaking with hesitation, "at least it is almost sttled."

"What! who, Nellie? Mr. Lennox has not been recaptured?"

"No—I cannot tell you until to-morrow."

"Does mother know it?"

"She does not, nor will she for a few days."

"I wondered you did not ride yesterday. I never knew you before give place to any. Did you remain at home to keep an engagement?"

"I did—and have made another for this afternoon."

"Is he among the élite of Varastone?"

"Fear not, Rad, that I shall ever do else than elevate my position in my choice."

They were interrupted by the arrival of Mr. Mordecai, and dinner was announced. After the meal, the carriage and Shetland pony were both put in requisi-

tion, and Major and Mrs. Nesbit, accompanied by Naphtali; and Howard, with the children in their own vehicle, set out to obtain a view of a sunset from a hill about six miles distant. Mr. Mordecai proposed a walk to Marion; Radcliff, wearied with idleness, sauntered out, and Cornelia, having refused to ride, was left alone. Retiring to her chamber, her toilet was again made with the greatest care, every curl arranged anew, and many glances given at the mirror, ere perfect satisfaction was evinced. At length, she descended to the parlor. In a short time a ring at the door announced the arrival of a visitor. Philip Spencer entered. "My dear Miss Nesbit," he said, pressing her hand warmly, "I am happy to find you thus alone. The feebleness of yesterday has so much increased, that I feared I should not be able to keep my appointment; but the anticipation of the pleasure of your society, seemed to inspire me with vigor. May I ask the same favor of you as yesterday?"

"A glass of wine? Certainly. I will get it in a moment."

"The pain I am enduring would be relieved more immediately by brandy."

"Of that, we have none; but port, madeira, and sherry, are at your service." A bottle of madeira was chosen, and placed before him. Glass after glass was poured out, and he professed himself feeling much better. There was a sparkling of the eye that almost startled Cornelia, and an unpleasant sensation intruded itself upon her, but Philip Spencer was before her, and on the point of offering himself in marriage. A house, precisely similar to the one occupied by his sister, was to be hers,—yes, hers, as the wife of Philip Spencer. She would be the envied of Varastone, as the daughter-in-law of Mrs. Spencer. Jewelry and rich attire floated before her imagination. Her reverie was interrupted by Mr. Spencer. "You are my best friend, Miss Nesbit, a more than friend, my beloved," he added, rising, and kissing her hand passionately; "When shall we consummate this happy union?" Miss Nesbit shrank

back involuntarily—it was unobserved. "For months my life has been a burden to me, dear Cornelia, supposing you engaged to another. I now seem to have mounted on eagles wings, so great is my happiness at finding myself mistaken."

The undue excitement of Mr. Spencer was now explained, and all unpleasant feeling dissipated.

"My father's consent has not been sought," she whispered, allowing the detention of her hand, "mine was given yesterday."

"That I will obtain to-morrow. My mother and sister long to greet you as their relative. But I must now leave you, my dearest Nellie, my life, my hope, my joy, and soon to consummate my happiness, by becoming my beloved bride; but the pain I find returning—I must wend my way home. May I beg a small bottle of wine, in case it increases before I reach there?"

The bottle was, of course, produced, and Cornelia, much elated, proceeded to her own chamber, to enjoy in anticipation, the station she was so soon to fill. Early in the morning, a small package, with a note, was placed in the hands of Cornelia, she opened it; a splendid diamond ring appeared to view. The note stated, that Mr. Spencer, finding his pain increase after leaving her, had resorted to her medicine, which, for the time, lulled the pain effectually, and as they had none of the same brand, he would be much indebted for a few bottles, if it could be sent without the knowledge of any one, as it might be attributed to mere caprice. With difficulty she succeeded in obtaining them without detection, and gave them into the hands of the messenger.

With a beating heart, she awaited the return of her father to dinner. Four o'clock came, and he entered alone.

"Where is Howard?" Mrs. Nesbit enquired.

"He, this afternoon, has a sad duty to perform—watching over the last agonies of poor Philip Spencer, without being able to mitigate his sufferings in the slightest degree. For the last year, he has been a sad

inebriate, but his character has been carefully shielded. His father lately has had hope of a reformation. Mr. Spencer has not once left his side, for the last six weeks, when out of the house, and nothing of a stimulating nature was allowed to enter it, Mrs. Spencer, being convinced, (when too late,) of her fatal error in regard to it. I am thankful that we were never tempted to offer it to a friend, and have been shown that water is the only beverage that can be taken with safety. I hope what we have for medicinal purposes, is under lock and key; a very small portion of such old brandy, would intoxicate”

“I have taken no cognizance of it,” replied Mrs. Nesbit, “forgetting it was in our possession.”

“Yes, there are six bottles in the middle pantry. I will put them in a place of safety.” The closet was examined carefully; only three could be found. “I may have been mistaken in the number,” he remarked, returning to the dining-room, “but my anxiety called my attention from my story. The last few days, he has been enabled to elude the vigilance of his father, and most unaccountably has obtained liquor. Mania-apotu is the result, and he is now a raving madman. I called at the house just now. Three physicians are with him, but they give little hope he will survive until the morning. Dr. Ruthven told Howard, that Mrs. Spencer missed a diamond ring, valued at five hundred dollars, and she has little doubt it has been sacrificed for this purpose.”

Offering some trifling apology, Cornelia hastily left the table, and retired to her own room. There, overwhelmed with horror, she gave way to a passionate flood of tears. The brandy she had sent—and the diamond ring was in her possession. She, however, soon became calm, arguing with herself that she was the unwitting instrument, and certainly the sacrifice. Her attention was arrested by approaching voices, and hastily opening a drawer, she pretended to be busily engaged arranging it. The first article that met her view, was the box containing the jewel. The drawer

was quickly closed, fearing detection, and another opened. How should it be returned, without exposure? was now the question. Little accustomed to acting for herself, for a long time she could devise no means; at length the express occurred to her. Should she trust so valuable an article to be conveyed in this manner? It was her only resource, and securing it carefully in a piece of linen, she directed it to Mrs. Spencer. Placing it in her pocket, and putting on her bonnet, she tremblingly descended the stairs.

"Where are you going, sister?" called Hattie; "May I go with you?"

"No, I want none of your company," she replied, sharply, and passed on.

The tear stood in the eye of Hattie as she quietly seated herself on Marion's knee, but a little address soon brought a smile on that face seldom shadowed by a cloud.

Having disposed of her now hateful burden, and feeling exceedingly nervous, she sought to dissipate it by a visit to Miss Graham. Being pressed to remain, and knowing that Philip Spencer would be the subject-matter of discourse at home, she sent a note announcing her intention of remaining a few days.

The following day the death of Philip Spencer met her eye in the daily paper, and it was only by endeavoring to view herself as a martyr to his wiles, that she could feel at all comfortable in being accessory to his downfall. But Cornelia Nesbit never erred, and this was ranked as one of the misfortunes of her sad fate.

When she returned home, to her great satisfaction, the "young Jew," as she always designated him, had left them, and taken up his abode in Varastone, occupying a small room in the same house with Mr. and Mrs. Ryers. Although his stay was short, the inmates of this hospitable dwelling were never forgotten, and many years after, when one of the first resident merchants of Varastone, he would often say, that his prosperity, under Providence, he attributed solely to the

timely assistance of Howard, when all human help had failed, and with a heart still overflowing with gratitude that text was quoted, 'When a stranger ye took me in.'

"Where is Marion, mamma?" inquired Cornelia, as she entered her mother's chamber, "I have been through the house in quest of her, and a more dead and alive place I never witnessed."

"She is with Mrs. Spencer, daughter; Dr. Ruthven came for her three days since. Your brother called yesterday, but Kate begged she might remain a little longer."

"How selfish in Kate; it must be an awful place. With my delicate constitution, I should die at once."

"Your sister is more hardy," replied Mrs. Nesbit, coldly.

"Hardy! Why, mamma, I am sometimes tempted, to think she has no sensibility at all. She almost lives in the midst of sickness, and in a routine of dull, what she terms, duties, yet her spirits are not in the least affected. If not as useful or as much esteemed, I at least, have more heart, mother. My feeling prevents my offering my services when I desire to do so."

"Such depth of feeling is very undesirable, my child, when it renders nugatory all usefulness."

Cornelia colored.

"I am glad to find you at home again, Nellie," said Howard, who came in at this moment, "I cannot tell when Marion will be able to return. Kate Ruthven has taken but little sustenance since the death of her brother, and is sitting night and day beside her mother, who is perfectly agonized, feeling herself in a measure accessory to her son's death, in permitting temptation to be placed before him. Nellie, could you not relieve Marion, and allow her to be a day or two with mother?"

"Do not ask it Howard," my nerves would be unstrung altogether."

A cloud gathered on the brow of her brother, and Mrs. Nesbit, to prevent a collision, enquired, "Has Mrs. Spencer yet any tidings of her diamond?"

"She has received it through the Grangeville post office, a most unhappy mistake for one who purloined it, as it will probably lead to discovery. Dr. Ruthven intends to sift the matter and discover, if possible, the author of the present misfortune in the Spencer family. The direction, he tells me, is evidently penned by a lady. I have not seen it; we shall examine it together. Three empty bottles, also were found in his closet, the brand will be carefully scrutinized."

The heart of Cornelia beat quickly, and a sensation like suffocation came over her, but Major Nesbit, coming in with the two children by the hand, attracted the attention of Howard, and it passed unobserved.

"Suspicion lights on Mr. Buck," he continued.

"On what foundation?"

"None, but his entire want of principle, and having a daughter of some education to direct the package, but he certainly would have sent it through the express."

"There is a gentleman below, Mrs. Nesbit," said Hogan, handing her a card at the same time.

"Mr. Nathan Mordecai," she said, glancing at it. "To what may we be indebted for the honor of his visit?"

"As executor of the estate," replied Howard. "The legacies will all be settled at once, as a sum was left in bank for that purpose."

"You will see him alone, Mary," said Major Nesbit, "as I do not wish to recognize him, even as a passing acquaintance."

The manner of Mr. Mordecai was embarrassed as he advanced to meet Mrs. Nesbit. Coldly bowing, she requested him to be seated.

"In accordance with the will of my brother," he said, "I have brought a draft for money due you on his estate."

The check was given, the receipt signed, and Mr. Mordecai arose to take his leave. "Can you inform me, Mrs. Nesbit," he inquired, coloring slightly, "of

the whereabouts of Mr. Lemuel Mordecai, I wish to direct a note to him."

"At present, he is with his sister, Mrs. Ryers, in Varastone, but in a short time he will leave there for the Theological Seminary at Lesbiton. His detention has been greater than he anticipated."

A contemptuous smile was the only reply, as he bade Mrs. Nesbit "good morning."

"My part in the matter is concluded," said Mrs. Nesbit, as she again entered her chamber. "I now resign this paper to you, Howard, deputing you to deliver it into the hands of Mr. Lemuel Mordecai. It of right belongs to him, I will not appropriate one cent of it."

"Mamma!" exclaimed Cornelia, "Did not Mr. Mordecai leave it to you in fee simple?"

"Could he now look upon my resignation of all claim in favor of his son, he would certainly approve of the act."

"Aunt Harriet has made the same resolve," said Howard, with a bright smile, "It is just worthy of you both," he added, kissing his mother affectionately. "Aunt's generous offer will be accepted, yours will be rejected."

"On what ground do you make such an assertion, my son?" inquired Major Nesbit.

"Mrs. Ryers has all the anxiety of a mother and has passed through pecuniary difficulties, which have taught her the value of the proffer. Lemuel would feel equally grateful, but stern necessity only would induce an acceptance of pecuniary obligation."

"And did his illness cost us nothing?" enquired Cornelia, sneeringly.

"Our well assorted library might answer that question, Nellie. Aunt Harriet has deputed me to buy the house in Rocklyn, occupied by Mrs. Douglas. She is obliged to sell, and offers it at five thousand dollars, but aunt declines taking advantage of her necessities, and will purchase only at a fair valuation of seven thousand, leaving two thousand on mortgage. There

is little doubt of the professorship, and grandfather overheard Miriam say, that to own and dwell in that house was the beau ideal of every comfort. The deed is to be drawn out in her name without her knowledge. Of Lemuel's refusal I am certain, but stock purchased in Marion's name would similarly benefit him."

"If you fail in your mission, then pursue your own course, Howard. It may facilitate their union, by enabling them to furnish, when he obtains a church."

Several days elapsed before Marion felt at liberty to return home, and when she left Mrs. Spencer, it was with a promise that she would soon see her again.

"You look pale and exhausted, Marion," remarked Mr. Mordecai, "seeing you only in the evening at Mr. Spencer's, the change in your appearance was not so visible. A drive or walk in the fresh air this afternoon will be serviceable to you."

"A few rambles among our beautiful hills will soon restore me, Lemuel."

"I have wandered frequently through our daily haunts in perfect solitude. I was selfishly desirous for your return. The seven days of your absence seemed interminable."

"I felt that I was at my post of duty, Lemuel."

"I know it, Marion; I was not reflecting, but I greatly feared you would not be able to join our pleasant party on the morrow."

"What party?"

"Ah! then I have news for you. Your family, Mr, and Mrs. Ryers and I are invited to dine with Mr. Houston to-morrow. Intercourse with him is always delightful, but your absence would have marred the pleasure sadly. He seems to rank me with his grandchildren; would that I could claim through you that title in reality?"

"In time I doubt not all will be well with us. There is the dinner-bell. In our walk this afternoon we can talk over future prospects."

On the following day, at an early hour, Mr. Mordecai entered the library where Marion and Cornelia were

sewing with their mother. After courteously saluting the ladies, he enquired, "Is not this tract day, Marion?"

"It is; but to-morrow will answer equally well. If you desire I should postpone it."

"Not at all. I was at leisure, and was going to propose accompanying you; a word spoken in season may make an impression. The Lord is sometimes pleased to bless the weakest instrument."

"To some families in my section your visit will be most acceptable. I thought of asking you to see them with me."

Many houses were visited, and the fervent supplication was offered for returning health beside many a sick bed by Mr. Mordecai, while Marion, in a neighboring cottage, would read a tract to those not capable of reading for themselves.

Before going to Mr. Houston's Lemuel returned to Varastone. Marion found her mother and Cornelia still in the library. "I will just change my dress," she said, "and join you in a moment."

"You had better follow your sister's example, Nellie. It will soon be time to start for grandfather's."

"I have a slight headache, Marion," she replied, "and will prefer riding this afternoon. Tom Graham and his sisters are going out on horseback. Rad and I promised to accompany them, as Trim and Jessie can be spared this afternoon. You know they both go beautifully under the saddle."

"Cornelia Nesbit," said her mother, gravely, "will the gratification of self always be your first object? Do you and Radcliff never aim at any thing of a higher nature?"

"The society of Mr. Mordecai is so inimical to both of us, mamma, that we can scarcely be expected to seek it; his grave face, and that sad smile, make me feel perfectly miserable."

"And is Radcliff so nervous also?"

"You know papa is offended with him about his extravagance."

"You mean he is offended with his father. At least, when he was told he had not fulfilled his contract by placing three hundred dollars into the family treasury, his manner savored much of feeling himself the aggrieved party."

"Rad told me two weeks since, mamma, that for eighteen months he had been out of business."

The work of Mrs. Nesbit fell from her hand. "No business! Are you not mistaken, Nellie. He has, of late, frequently asked the loan of ten dollars, until his term became due. Is it possible he has been practising deception?"

"I knew he confessed it to papa, this morning, or I should not have mentioned it. But here Howard and Radcliff come. Please do not implicate me, mamma."

The two gentlemen were engaged in close conversation. Radcliff looked much displeased.

"It is at your offer, Radcliff," said Howard, "accept it if you think proper."

Major Nesbit followed almost immediately. "To what offer are you alluding, Howard?" he enquired.

"I must first communicate some news, that will give you all pleasure," he replied; "Mr. Ryers is elected to the professorship."

"I am indeed rejoiced," said Major Nesbit.

"Father," enquired Radcliff, "do you consider it a cause for rejoicing, that foreigners are displacing so many worthy men of our own nation?"

"A worthy Englishman has succeeded an equally excellent Scotchman. I confess, I am quite satisfied with the appointment. But my question remains unanswered."

"The vacancy to which I referred, was that made in my office, by this appointment. Mr. Ryers, you know, wrote five hours in the after part of the day, for me, for which he received five hundred dollars. His lectures occupied the morning. This is open to Radcliff, until something more lucrative offer."

"Your proposition might be most tempting to one of a different stamp," he replied, haughtily, "but Rad-

cliff Nesbit aims at something beyond an amanuensis, even to the Honorable Howard Nesbit. John Spencer, or any other school boy may fill that station."

"An affirmative or negative, would have been sufficient," replied Howard, coldly, and turning to his mother, at once changed the topic of conversation. Radcliff, evidently mortified at his calm manner, left the room. Cornelia followed to prepare her riding dress and hat, for her afternoon's excursion.

"Only fifteen minutes before three," exclaimed Marion. "We shall delay dinner at grandpa's, to-day. Where is Howard?"

Major Nesbit smiled. "Howard is seldom punctual in keeping an engagement with his grandfather—always before the time. To-day, he gave as an excuse for preceding us, his anxiety to be the first to communicate the good news of Mr. Ryers. Excuse, or no excuse, I never knew him fail, when opportunity offered, to be at the side of his grandfather, at least fifteen minutes before the time appointed. Grandfather and his boy are firm friends. How proudly he says, 'My boy,' and how the tear glistens in his eye, when he speaks of him as the prop of his declining years. I could sit, Mary, and listen to his praises of 'my boy,' forever." The voice of the father faltered. Mrs. Nesbit made no reply, but a tear was gently brushed aside, as they pursued their way in silence.

Mr. Houston, who was in the lawn, pointing out some choice plants to his friends, gave them his usual kindly greeting, and the children delighted to meet, enjoyed themselves in the fresh air until called to dinner."

"Your brother seems particularly bright to-day, Marion," remarked Mrs. Ryers, as they seated themselves in the parlour, after dinner. "Have you noticed it, or is it because my own path is strewed with flowers. How wonderfully the Lord is leading us. A few relics only left us from a large estate, which we supposed within our grasp, and another door is opened for a

comfortable independence, that no human foresight could have imagined."

"Speaking of relics, Miriam, did Mr. Ryers bring those paintings of yours to show grandfather and mother?"

"I have them in my pocket Miss Marion," he replied, at the same time placing them upon the table. The whole party seated themselves around it to examine them more closely. The attention of Marion was arrested by a small package being placed in her hand by Mrs. Ryers.

"Receive this, dear Marion," she said, "as a testimony of my affection, and wear it for the sake of the love the originals both bear you," she added, laughing.

It was opened, a small golden tablet, with a fine chain attached, appeared to view. On either side, enclosed, were the miniature pictures of Mr. Mordecai, and his sister, exquisitely painted by an Italian artist. The color of Marion rose as she slightly glanced at the likeness of Mr. Mordecai, and fixed her whole attention on that of his sister. "Lemuel can easily be removed," she whispered, archly, "if you deem it beneath your notice; I feel quite flattered by your devotion."

Marion's color mounted higher, as she closed the precious gift, "How can you part with it, Miriam?"

"I have its fac simile. They were taken for both parents, about a year previous to my mother's death, and were among the few relics of inestimable value, of which Lemuel obtained possession, the day he left his home."

"I cannot boast of having so sightly a present for the young ladies," said Howard, bringing two small plain-looking boxes from the secretary, "but I am deputed by two members of this party to offer them for what they are worth to Mrs. Ryers and Miss Marion Nesbit."

"To which of our friends are we indebted?" enquired Mrs. Ryers.

"We will see first the estimate placed upon the gift." The lid was removed and a parchment unfolded.

The brow of Mrs. Ryers knit, as she slowly perused a deed, conveying to her the house in Rocklyn. Her hand trembled, as she silently passed it to her husband. Then turning to Howard, she attempted to speak, but emotion choked her utterance, and she burst into a flood of tears.

"What is this?" enquired Mr. Ryers, with unfeigned astonishment; "That beautiful house, which we so much desired to rent, but thought five hundred a year beyond our means. To whose munificence are we indebted for such a gift?"

"Not a gift, Mr. Ryers," replied Miss Houston, "but purchased with a sum, belonging of right to Mrs. Ryers, from the estate of Mr. Mordecai."

"Can it be possible, Miss Houston," inquired Mrs. Ryers, "that your legacy has been appropriated to me? Certainly it has not been relinquished from your abundance."

"The gratification I have felt, in only doing my duty, has fully compensated me for anything you may consider a sacrifice. You would oblige me, my dear Miriam, by receiving it as your due, and making no further remark upon it."

"I will endeavor to obey you, my dear Miss Houston," she replied, affectionately placing her arm around her, "by forbearing outward expression; but we shall always feel, that the Lord has raised up this family as instruments to scatter the clouds which have so long hovered over us. Reunion with an idolized brother, and a beloved uncle, has been through your means, accomplished. Truly, the Lord's thoughts are higher than our thoughts, and his ways than our ways. That heavy cloud which threw so deep a gloom over us, in the illness of Lemuel, has passed away, leaving the brightest hues, almost excluding from view every vestige of its sombre lines."

"But one of my boxes is passing quite unnoticed," remarked Howard, anxious to divert the current, "Marion does not condescend to cast a glance upon it."

"I crave pardon, Howard; my mind, I own, was rather engrossed with—with—something else."

All laughed heartily at the awkward apology of Marion, and Miss Houston, who was beginning to feel embarrassed, soon regained her self-possession.

"Suppose I assist you in unpacking, Marion," said Mr. Mordecai. "The inscription, or whatever it may be, on that paper, seems to require a vast amount of consideration."

Marion crimsoned deeply, as she endeavored, with assumed carelessness, to place it out of view.

"Nay, Marion," he continued, laying one finger upon it, and gently taking it from her hand; "we must knew the index to the contents, to assist us in the examination."

An imploring look, however, immediately possessed her again of her treasure, and with a countenance expressive of much satisfaction, she laid it beside her, and was busily engaged with the contents of the box. No sooner had it left her hand, than her grandfather, who was sitting next her, quietly drew it towards him without being observed, mounted his glasses, and was about reading it aloud, when a suppressed laugh from the whole group attracted her, and looking up, she saw with dismay the cause of the diversion. With much assumed gravity, Mr. Houston read as follows: "Stock purchased to the amount of five thousand dollars, for Marion Nesbit. A bridal present for my daughter. The interest to be laid aside until that event takes place."

As he finished, Mr. Mordecai, whose eye had been fixed on Mr. Houston, arose, and taking the hand of Mrs. Nesbit, said, with much feeling: "You have found means to exercise your generous nature in this matter, my almost mother. Do not attribute my declining it to an improper motive. Pride, I trust, is at least subdued; but my thanks, as well as Marion's, are due you, as her welfare is mine. By me this money will be considered sacred, and shall be appropriated to her own use. Such a boon as Marion will give an in-

centive to labor, and I shall yet be able to offer her a home abounding in comforts, blessed with the society of Marion."

"Dear child," interrupted Mr. Houston, smiling, "her position was becoming too prominent. Motioning me silence, and bribing me with a kiss, she left the room, seeking probably the privacy of the garden. She delights in wandering among the flowers, many of which were planted by her own hand."

"With your leave, Mr. Houston, I will seek her; I fear I have wounded her by speaking too freely. I was led away by my own feelings."

"My lease has not yet expired, my young gentleman," replied Mr. Houston, rising, and playfully laying his hands upon the shoulders of Mr. Mordecai. "Be careful how you meddle with the property of others before you have a legal claim. I shall make enquiry after that which yet belongs to myself, to which none can dispute my prior right."

"And a right which shall never be disputed under any circumstances," returned Mr. Mordecai, affectionately.

In a few moments afterwards, Marion was seen at the extremity of the garden, talking with great animation with her grandfather, who was pointing out some rare plants sent the year previous by old Mr. Mordecai.

"Howard," said Mr. Mordecai, as they stood alone at a window overlooking the garden; "for your sake that money should be appropriated to the use of your own family. Although so prosperous, your views of duty will never allow you to settle in life, and I know that Julia Ruthven is necessary to your happiness."

"You are right, Mordecai. I look forward with impatience to the day when Julia Ruthven shall preside over the White Cottage, and compose one of our family circle. Her mother's health is now the only obstacle. Fortune has indeed smiled upon me, far beyond anything I could have anticipated."

"But your mother told me, that you would not

marry, until you had settled an independence upon her."

"Of course, the welfare of my parents would be my first consideration, Lemuel. The cause of Lughton, Grees, & Co., with some other suits, has enabled me to settle twenty thousand dollars upon my mother, during her life. As we own the house, that sum, with my father's half pay from the army, will leave me free to be united to Julia Ruthven."

"Is not the course pursued by Mrs. Ruthven, rather selfish?" enquired Mr. Mordecai.

"Mr. Jameston, is becoming restive, and thinks her quite unreasonable. As she would have a happy home with any of her children, I rather coincide with him in opinion; but want of health, produces an inertness, that renders her averse to any change, and I believe, the young ladies would remain Miss Ruthvens forever, ere they would thwart her wishes. But, I have an engagement at five o'clock, with Harry, I must ask you to excuse me, Mordecai, it is now half-past four." Taking leave of Mr. and Mrs. Ryers, he set out for Varastone. Mr. Mordecai, and the children, joined Mr. Houston and Marion in the garden.

After two hours spent with Dr. Ruthven at Mr. Spencer's, Howard, with a heavy heart, took the stage for Grangeville.

"There are the Miss Grahams," remarked a stranger, to a gentleman seated beside him, as a party dashed by on horseback.

"Who is that fascinating being with them, Tom—the lady, with the graceful white feather wreathed around her hat?"

"As wise as yourself, Bob, in regard to the pretty girls of Grangeville," was the reply.

"By George, I'll have an introduction, or my name's not Robert Forsyth, Baronet."

"Barring the title," replied his friend, with an arch look, "plain Robert Forsyth. Bar—Bar—Barsinister, did you say?"

"No insinuations, Master Tom. For the future,

your travelling companion and friend, is Robert Forsyth, Esq., Baron of—of—”

“Shamtown?”

“Thomas! No; now I have it. Of Germany. Do you understand?”

“Fully and entirely comprehend, Robert Forsyth, Baronet, barring the title.”

A hearty laugh followed this miserable sally. Howard was seated unperceived, in a corner of the back seat, and a startled look passed between them, as the stage stopped before the gate of Major Nesbit, and he arose to leave it, Cornelia and Radcliff rode up at the same time, dismounted, and throwing the reins to Hogan, they waited until Howard joined them, and they proceeded together up the lawn. Cornelia ran up stairs, to lay aside her riding habiliments, and feeling slightly fatigued, she threw herself upon the couch for a few moments before tea. A gentle tap at the door was soon heard.

“May I come in, Nellie?” enquired Howard.

“If you have any thing pleasant for me, How.; but you will not be welcome, with the long face you had on a few moments since.”

“I only wanted to ask a few questions, Nellie. Have you given any of your last letter paper away?”

“To what paper do you allude?”

“That with your stamp, which I purchased six weeks since, at Marchilles.”

“I was not aware there was any name upon it,” she replied, starting from the sofa. “I have given none of it to any one, nor used it,” she added, coloring deeply.

“Then some one has stolen it from you, for the paper on which the direction is written to Mrs. Spencer, has your impression. And Nellie,” he continued, with a quivering lip, “a fac-simile of your handwriting is upon it also.”

“Do you accuse me of purloining diamonds, Howard Nesbit?” she inquired, passionately.

“Harry Ruthven saw the name, as well as myself,

Nellie. Will you not examine into it, and let the imputation be thrown on whom it is due?"

"I am above suspicion, sir, and shall take no step in the matter. Will Dr. Ruthven dare attempt to impugn my name?"

"He made not even a remark, Nellie; but as our eyes rested together upon a name easily deciphered, he changed color, and immediately destroyed the paper."

The agitation of Cornelia was excessive; she enquired in a scarcely audible voice, "Has Kate Ruthven a suspicion of me?"

"I cannot tell. No word passed between Dr. Ruthven and me. When the three bottles were examined, I saw at once they were a portion of some I observed in our store-room, only a fortnight since. At that time there were six; now, the number is reduced to three. Of this fact, Harry knows nothing."

"And might not some one have taken my paper, and imitated my handwriting?"

"I should be a happy man, Nellie, if—if—"

"Hold, Howard, in mercy hold."

"Nellie, say you know nothing of it; I will not rest until I find the perpetrator of the deed. But avow any knowledge of it, Nellie, every effort shall be made to bury it in oblivion."

The head of Cornelia sank, and bursting into a passion of tears, she said, "I have been the victim of the misrepresentations of Philip Spencer."

"Were you not aware he was an inebriate?"

"I heard Marion speak of his unsteady habits, but made allowances for her strict ideas of temperance."

"But when did you last see him? For six months, the wild expression of his eye, and bloated appearance, spoke more loudly than words. None could mistake his propensity."

"I mistook it, of course," she replied, with great dignity, "as I accepted his proffered hand."

"His hand, Nellie! I deem it right to tell you, to convince you how mistaken you were in every respect, that only a fortnight since, the enquiry being made

whether the pretty Miss Nesbit had won his heart? his answer was, 'When I marry, I assure you, it will be with one of undoubted rank. The name of Nesbit is little known among my peers. Her brother Howard,' he added, 'is just a rocket, that will blaze and dazzle for a day, and again sink into the obscurity from which my father brought him.'"

The whole frame of Cornelia quivered with passion. "I mention this, Nellie, for the purpose of showing you how easily we may be misled, and I now see his object was to obtain liquor at your expense. He was not serious in any offer he may have made."

Covering her face in the foot of the bed, Cornelia sat motionless, overwhelmed with indignation and wounded pride.

"Nellie, dear Nellie," said her brother, taking her hand kindly within his; "you have my deepest pity that you were led into so much error."

"Cornelia raised her head, and scornfully replied, "Do not expend your compassion upon me, Howard Nesbit; go to the hovels of poverty, with your pious sister Marion, and lavish it upon those who need it. Leave me, sir, and never again mention this hateful subject."

Howard immediately arose, and saying, "May your eyes sometime be opened, Nellie, to feel you may possibly commit a fault, and acknowledge yourself in error," left the room, and awaited in the library, the return of the other members of the family from Mr. Houston's.

## CHAPTER XV.

“ For the great Creator’s seal is set to all his works,  
The finger of God is the stamp upon them all,  
But each has its separate variety.”

A BEAUTIFUL autumnal evening had attracted the whole family of Nesbits to the piazza, on the west side of the house; nothing could exceed the beauty of the landscape, the every variety of the changing leaf was made clearly distinct in the glorious sunlight of the sinking orb, reflecting also, the brightest tints upon the clouds, as they floated lazily over the heavens.

“ It is a pity the scenery-loving Mordecai were not here,” remarked Major Nesbit, “ he would discover something emblematic of life in every light and shadow in that fleece, as it rolls over yon lofty arch.”

“ I wonder how you can admire his enthusiastic folly, papa,” answered Cornelia, sneeringly: “ he is so unlike all others of the human family; and Houston is imbibing his visionary views rapidly; he is forever reading the changing colors in the clouds, and goes off into rhapsodies at the sight of a silver lining, or golden border, as he calls the usual hues of the heavens, in a clear sunset; Marion encourages it, as she is more than a little tinctured herself with the same foolishness.”

“ Inherited from her father, probably, Nellie; I never thought myself unprofitably employed while watching a picture at once so elevating, and so subduing. It is written, my daughter, ‘ The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth forth his handy-work.’ ”

“ Well,” she replied, “ I see only a vast expanse, exhibiting numberless brilliant clouds, and enjoy their magnificence, but no fairy spell has bound me to see my life written there.”

"Come, look at Houston, do," whispered Marion. They all stepped noiselessly towards the spot where he stood, apparently tranfixed, gazing with a countenance indicative of wonder, admiration, and delight; his chest perceptibly heaving with the mingled emotions, seeming almost oppressive, his hands were clasped, his body slightly bent forward, one foot rested upon a stone lying in the path; a painter could not have chosen a more exquisite subject for his pencil; so thought Dr. Ruthven, who was standing on the back-ground, sketching the beautiful, unconscious boy.

"Do not speak, I shall lose the attitude," gasped the doctor. "See the cloud that entrances him; how heavily dark, yet how glitteringly brilliant the edge."

"See!" cried Hattie, skipping up to the group, "See! see! the purple cloud with a golden border."

"Houston turned; his hands unclasping, fell to his sides. As he approached, he raised his bright dark eyes to the west, and exclaimed:

"But what must it be to be there."

"What particularly attracted you, Housie?" enquired Dr. Ruthven, laying down his sketch, and joining the circle

"The glory bursting through the darkness," he replied, making a semi-circle with his extended finger towards the skies.

"It is pretty," said Hattie, looking up earnestly; "but not one of the edges meet."

The sudden rise and short bark of the house-dog, indicated the approach of a familiar footstep; the next moment he was exhibiting the roughest manifestations of delight towards Mr. Mordecai.

"Why is it, Mr. Lemuel," asked Hattie, after she was seated comfortably in his arms, her very frequent lodgment; "why is it the bright border never reaches all round the dark clouds?"

"Yes, Mordecai; what lesson may we be taught by the unfinished circle of gold about those mountains of haze? Can you tell us?" asked Dr. Ruthven.

"In this life we never enjoy or witness unbroken

happiness: it is to be found in the celestial world only—there only perpetual bliss—” he repeated the last sentence very solemnly. There was no response. Silently they stood watching the ever-changing, ever-beautiful emblems.

“We are invading the domains of imprudence, I think,” said Howard, at length; “yet I scarcely can tear myself away from so gorgeous a display.”

“Were I an M. D., and particularly of Ruthven’s acknowledged skill and judgment, I should have prescribed a retreat from this chilly south-wester, before Birdie had been shaking like an aspen leaf.”

“I do not feel so very cold, Mr. Lemuel; I had been running until just before you came.”

“The greater necessity for the movement within doors, dear; I will lead the way.”

“I did propose it,” replied the doctor; “but was overruled by the ladies, and an ample supply of shawls.”

Young Mordecai and Hattie were followed by the whole party into the house, Cornelia declaring “It was far more romantic than comfortable to be planet-reading and such nonsense, with teeth chattering in the cold.”

“I was just beginning to feel chilly,” said Hattie; “but Mr. Lemuel wrapped me up so nicely in his large sleeves, I am as warm as toast.”

“The warmth has the same effect upon your tongue the cold had upon your sister’s teeth,” rejoined her father.

“Indeed, papa, I only answer the questions; Mr. Lemuel whispers to me almost all the time,” said the mortified child.

“Well, dear, if his fault, he may rejoice in the result,” returned the Major, laughing. “I would not like such a continual din poured into my ears.”

“And yet, father, you constantly encourage, and never seem to tire of her recital of her adventures in her rude plays,” observed Cornelia, rather tartly.

Major Nesbit looked lovingly upon his youngest

daughter, her return smile showed her entire satisfaction ; Mr. Mordecai drew his arms more closely around her. Little Hattie was quite happy again, as her head resumed its position against the bosom of her "dear friend." The evening passed pleasantly, and not unprofitably. The two gentlemen remained for worship, and returned to the city together.

"I regret I allowed Houston to go with Charlie Nettleton," said Mrs. Nesbit, lingering at the door, after the visitors had taken leave. "I had no idea he would have kept him so late ; it is past nine o'clock."

"Why, mother," exclaimed Hattie, running towards the door, "I saw Charlie leave Housie at the gate long ago ; he said he was going to look at the moon's picture in the water."

"Alone!" She rang the bell hastily, and directed the servant to go quickly to the mill-race and tell Houston to hasten home. Marion, greatly troubled, ran after him with a shawl for her little brother.

After a short delay, he returned, bringing with him the precious missing-one. He said "he had not the least idea of the time, and had not felt at all cold. I was sitting, mother, on the log-bridge, looking at the moon in the stream, and the beautiful clouds as they seemed to be fixing themselves up by the waters, just as people do in the looking-glass. I imagined them alive, mother, and fell asleep while watching them. I feel a great deal colder now than I did then ; I would like to sit by a fire. Uh! mother, I am all shivering."

"My darling boy must not go near the water again in the evening ; stronger constitutions will not bear contact with the dampness." Then folding the shawl over his night garments, which had been previously warmed by the kitchen fire, she kissed his flushed cheek, and added, "brother Howard will carry you up to the little bed in my room, dearest."

"That is the sick-bed, mother ; I do not want to sleep there."

"How will you like to share mine, Housie?" asked his brother.

"Very much, Howard. May I, mother; say yes—do."

"Say yes, mother," echoed Hattie, "and then Howard will tell him one of his splendid stories in the morning."

"I am nowise inclined to say anything else, children; I am perfectly satisfied to have him in Howard's charge."

The gratified eye that met that of his mother, said plainly "her confidence shall not be misplaced."

Before dawn, Mrs. Nesbit was aroused from a light slumber by a tap at her chamber door. It was Howard.

"Do not be unnecessarily alarmed, mother," he said, seeing her cheek blanch at his unexpected appearance. "Housie may not be very sick, but I thought it best to have you direct me what to do for him. I have used nitre and bathed his head repeatedly with cold water, but the fever is not in the least allayed, and his pulse is very certainly rising. Shall I go for Dr. Rodgers, mother?"

"No, Howard," interrupted Major Nesbit; "you remain with your mother. Bring Housie down here, and I will ride over for the doctor."

"I could walk there, sir, in less time than a horse can be prepared; what do you say, mother?"

Mrs. Nesbit looked irresolute from one to the other. "I cannot decide," she said, "neither to have your brother brought here, the poor child shrank from the 'little bed' last evening. My dear, dear, boy; I trust this sickness is not—." She burst into a flood of weeping. Howard turned away to conceal his own emotion.

"Let not your heart be troubled; our boy is in the keeping of a kind Father, Mary," Major Nesbit gently whispered, as her head drooped upon his shoulder.

"I feel it, Philip," she replied making a great effort to regain composure. "But as that fragile child stood this evening, surveying the heavens, with a countenance reflecting almost angelic loveliness, my heart

had inexpressible misgivings. I will go to him now, Howard; I prefer your father remaining with me, yet you had better take a horse, dear; the doctor can return with him, and prevent any detention. You can walk back."

Anxiously did the mother listen for the returning horse, and as anxiously for the physician's opinion, as he stood with her at the bed-side of her heart's idol. Delicate from his birth, Houston Nesbit, had necessarily been the constant care and companion of his mother; she alone understood, and soothed the childish trials incident to sickness; she entered fully into all his pleasures, into all his troubles; here the mother's heart had anchored, and she felt, if bereaved of his companionship, life would be comparatively void and cheerless; the world's strongest bond, life's greatest charm would be broken. She was startled by the voice of Dr. Rodgers in reply to a question of Howard.

"I cannot possibly answer for the result, Howard, he may rally, but his system will hardly endure the necessary remedies. Hattie would have stamina sufficient to rise above it; the boy is frail—very frail—yet there is no occasion for alarm; there is no immediate danger, he will linger weeks, perhaps months; if mine, I would rather not, he will only live to suffer: I will leave my directions below, Major Nesbit."

"The doctor did not mean to be unkind, mother, it is only an unfortunate brusque manner," said Howard, in answer to the pained expression of face, "pity so many disregard the admonition to be courteous; how much a little more attention to it would do for society."

"No doubt of it, dear; well-timed sympathy graciously given, will lighten a heavy weight of sorrow, and a community would soon manifest the effect of affability and true courtesy, the earth would be divested of half its sadness."

"Lemuel Mordecai would call it a 'golden border,'" returned Howard, laughing; "mother I think Houston is a perfect specimen of genuine politeness, and how

much gentleness there is mingled with the boyism of Bird."

"Yes, they have both very winning ways; Hattie is never uncouth, even in her boisterous mirth. I have great reason for thankfulness, Howard, and trust I am grateful for more than one of my sons; yet I fear there is a large portion of pride in my heart towards Houston, and his little sister," she raised the attenuated hand to her lips—Howard made no reply. A few days good nursing, and strict adherence to the doctor's injunctions reduced the fever, and partially the disease, but the child was extremely prostrate, and there was very little prospect of his restoration. Hattie was his constant companion, she was able to entertain him when all others failed. "Bird," he said to her one day after a visit from Dr. Rodgers, "what did the doctor mean when he told father I would never scratch an old head?"

"I am sure, Housie, I cannot tell. I would not want to scratch any head but my own, would you?"

"No, I did not know people employed others to do so for them, when they were old; I wonder if the doctor gets somebody."

"I suppose so," said Hattie carelessly, "here is the puzzle, Housie; Miss Julia brought it; now, you must try to open it;" the fingers went eagerly to work, and the two children were so absorbed in the game, neither observed the entrance of Howard.

"Is not Miss Julia Ruthven handsome, Birdie? she is so kind to me."

"She is splendid, Housie, I like her dearly, and mother says she does too; she made this puzzle purse on purpose for you, and she told me which ever opened it, might divide with the other, what is in it."

"Mother says she is going to be our real sister, some of these days, because Howard is to be married to her."

"She seems just like our sister now, Housie, like sister Marion, don't she?"

"Yes, nearly; I like to have her with me almost as

well ; how sweetly she sings for me, Birdie. I like her singing much better than sister Nellie's, it is not so loud."

"Oh ! but Housie, every one says sister Nellie sings better than any other lady in Grangeville."

"I know, Birdie, but Miss Julia sings the hymns, I learned at Sunday-school, and they suit me better, than sister's songs : besides I always have to ask sister —she never offers like Miss Julia."

" You have it, nearly," she exclaimed, throwing her arms on the bed, and her face down on her hands ; " the opening is just there somewhere, I saw father pull it open about that spot."

" Yes, I see it is opening a little."

" Yes, yes, Housie," she said, drawing still nearer with her eyes earnestly watching, and her closed hands raised in glad expectation ; as the concealed slide yielded, the purse dropped from the fingers of the exhausted child ; Hattie alarmed, sprang up to run for their mother, but Howard prevented her, and motioning her to be perfectly still, calmly employed the usual restoratives ; they succeeded to the delight of Hattie, who felt she had been the occasion of this illness ; Howard soothed and comforted his little sister, wiping away the tears of self-reproach, as her head lay heavily upon his bosom ; she kissed Houston, and whispered promises to be very gentle when left with him, and never again to trouble him while he was sick ; Houston stroked and patted her cheeks, and pointing to the secret opening, feebly enquired. " What where the contents ?" Howard with a quiet smile took up the purse, and after a short delay held to the view of both children a beautiful tablet containing the hair of Hattie and Houston Nesbit prettily platted together, and their names engraved on the outside.

" It is splendid," said Hattie drawing a long breath, but it cannot be divided brother."

" Dr. Ruthven meant it might belong to both, I guess," murmured Houston, " Bird can wear it, and I can see it, and we can call it ours. You belong to

Bird and to me too, Howard, and we never want to divide you."

The brother's eyes watered as without speaking, he softly put back the hair, and kissed the forehead of the dying boy, entwining his little arms around his neck, he said "dear Howard I wish I was as good as you are."

"All goodness is the gift of God; my precious brother can obtain it by sincere prayer."

"I know it, Howard, and I do pray; I am sure I love the Saviour, but I am not good; I have so often done wrong; I have so often been mad with Radcliff; I did not mind it so much at the time, Howard, now it makes me feel so sad." His voice faltered, his feeble frame was exhausted by this effort, and sinking down upon the pillow, he lay motionless.

With little Hattie by his side, Howard kneeling down in a low voice presented the desires of his brother, and of his own full heart, at the throne of grace; a faint smile was resting upon the pale features as they arose, the lips moved, but no sound was heard. Howard stood until he ascertained Houston, had fallen asleep. Hattie resisted as he drew her from the bed, and motioned her towards the door; a few words in her ear induced her to accompany him, but she resolutely paused on the outside, refusing to go down stairs.

"Indeed, I will not disturb him again," she pleaded, "I will not speak, unless he speaks to me, Howard; do let me stay with Housie, poor sick Housie."

"Birdie, Miss Julia, has sent for you to pass the day with her, she will return with you this evening herself."

She shook her head.

"The doctor desires Housie, may be kept entirely quiet, Bird, and mother wishes me to take you to Miss Julia."

"Frank Nettleton came for me to play marbles with him brother, but I would not go; I would rather stay, than even spend the day with Miss Julia; please let me stay, brother." The tears rapidly coursed over her cheeks. Howard looked undecided;—she saw it;

—with nervous eagerness, she urged, “Housie is my brother most of all, because he is little like me, he loves me to be there;—must I go away Howard.

The hand that had not been taken from the knob quietly turned it; Hattie glancing a look of gratitude towards her brother, darted under his arm, and without the slightest noise coiled herself upon the foot of the bed; Howard, handed her some of her little books; she smiled her thanks, and looked bright and happy, although her eyes still manifested how much she had been grieved, her brother left her to report his ill success.

“I hardly believed she would leave him for the day,” said, Major Nesbit, “she told Frank Nettleton, to take her hoop, ball, and marbles, until Housie was well, she did not care for them, now. He plead for only ‘one game,’ but she declined absolutely.”

Mrs. Nesbit, Marion, and Miss Houston, were in the room, when Howard came up with the doctor, two hours after. “Housie still sleeps, and Bird is making up for the time she lost last night,” he observed, after the doctor’s salutations to the ladies.

“We all feel encouraged by this delightful, serene sleep of our little boy, doctor; he cannot but be greatly strengthened by it,” said, Mrs. Nesbit, as he walked towards the bed.

“I hope so, Mrs. Nesbit, and without an anodyne too; it is quite extraordinary,” he replied.

Howard noticed a sudden change in the countenance of Dr. Rodgers, and in reply to his glance, lifted Hattie from the bed.

“She will be troubled, Howard, dear,” Miss Houston began; but his excited, agitated manner disclosed the truth. The long silence and unchanged attitude of the doctor, alarmed Mrs. Nesbit. “This sound sleep is favorable?” she asked, rather doubtfully.

The doctor shook his head, and sighed; Mrs. Nesbit sank on the side of the bed; “Will my boy never awake?” she exclaimed, looking round imploringly; “is he not sleeping?”

"Sleeping in Jesus, sister ; blessed sleep from which none ever wake to weep," whispered, Miss Houston.—Her head fell on the pillow, beside her boy. No one interfered with the mother's grief. The gentlemen withdrew into an adjoining apartment.

"The change was very sudden, and to me very unexpected," the doctor remarked to Major Nesbit, "but I never beheld a more peaceful transition."

"He had fainted from over-exertion a little while before," said Howard, "but the same calm smile that assured me he had entirely recovered, is upon his face now. It is inexpressibly beautiful, and the medalion he was in the act of handing Hattie, is still in his extended fingers."

A servant opened the door to say Dr. Ruthven wished to speak with Mr. Howard.

"I am very sorry for you, Major, very sorry," said the doctor, "drawing on his overcoat, death has made three breaches in your hearthstone, since I have been physician here. Sad losses—very sad, sir—medical men feel badly when a patient is carried off so suddenly—" he fastened the last button, and stood holding by the back of a chair—"yet," he continued, "it is the debt to nature, we are all compelled to meet—these are only a little in advance of the rest of us."

"This has been a blissful change for our boy, doctor ; may we all be as ready for our summons ; the hour is approaching when you and I shall have done with time forever ; we are both on the western side of the hill of life."

"For that very reason I would enjoy the remnant, major ; what pleasure do you Bible readers, find in searching into the supposed glories of an unknown world, when there is so much to attract in our own?"

"Turn Bible-reader, and solve your own queries, doctor ; I am confident the solution would prove satisfactory ; I speak from experience. I am told 'there is a time to die,' the same scriptures teach how to meet that 'time.' A prayerful investigation of that Bible, disrobes death of all its gloom-lights up

the grave, and opens a glorious Heaven to earth's weary wanderer."

Dr. Rodgers, rubbed his hand across the back of the chair, cleaned his throat, but said not a word. Major Nesbit continued, "I thought death an 'insatiate archer' indeed, when by a single dart he struck down my two boys; you witnessed my rebellious spirit, doctor; you know how long my proud insubmissive heart refused to be comforted. Since then I have become not only a Bible reader, but a firm believer in all its doctrines, the subject of its gracious dominion and an humble follower of the adorable Redeemer there revealed."

"I am very glad, major;" replied the doctor, hastily drawing on his gloves; "I am very glad you have found consolation, from whatever source it may be derived."

"May you have the same support in the hour of trial, my dear friend," returned the major; "and when time shall be no longer with you, may you find as sure a refuge in that Redeemer."

"Thank you, thank you, Major Nesbit. But I must leave you, as my patients require my immediate attention. Command my services, this afternoon. If I can render you any assistance, I shall be happy to do so. Good morning, sir."

When Dr. Rodgers took his leave, Major Nesbit, retired to his library. The windows, through which the sun was usually beaming, were now closed, casting a sombre appearance over the room. Major Nesbit started. Had death indeed removed an endeared one from the family circle? There stood the chair belonging to Houston, the gift of Howard. Often, when performing some light service in the garden, beside his father, it was brought out by his little sister, fearing Housie might be tired. The pale and smiling face of his little boy as he gratefully received it, was vividly impressed upon him. The closet door was open; a closet exclusively Houston's. There laid his implements for gardening. His broad-rimmed hat

worn to shield him from the sun. His top and ball lay there also. Upon another shelf his school books, were carefully arranged. His copy book, pen, and inkstand were upon the table. The eye of Major Nesbit was intently fixed upon each article, as it presented itself before him, then, with a deep groan, in agony of spirit, he sank upon his knees, and besought the Lord for strength, and submission to his will under so heavy an affliction. Tears came to his relief, and he arose in a more tranquil frame. "I am selfish," he murmured, "remaining here when my support is so much needed." As he arose, a light foot was heard in the hall, and Hattie bounded into the library.

"Oh papa! dear papa;" she exclaimed, "Housie found out the puzzle; but I am going to coax him to leave the medallion in, and when he gets well we shall have splendid fun with the boys. They'll never find it out, its so hard."

"Where have you been, Hattie?" enquired her father, with as much composure as he could assume, at the same time taking her upon his knee.

"Asleep, papa," she replied, laughing; "I went to sleep on Housie's bed. Somebody must have put me in my own. When I waked, who should be there but Miss Julia; she told me Housie was asleep, and I didn't open the door, for fear of waking him."

"My darling child," said Major Nesbit, pressing her closely to his bosom.

"Do you love it so dark here, papa?" she enquired. "But come, I guess Housie is awake now," springing at the same time from his knee, and taking his hand,

Major Nesbit was silent, and Hattie looking up, perceived a tear glisten in his eye. Her countenance immediately fell, and taking a tiny white handkerchief from her pocket, she climbed again upon his knee, and carefully wiping it away, she placed her arm carressingly around his neck, and kissed him fondly, enquiring, "Is Housie so very sick, papa."

"Would you not love to have Houssie a bright angel in Heaven, Hattie, with a golden harp and

crown?" Hattie shook her head, as her eyes filled with tears. "I couldn't be alone, papa. What should I do without him?"

"But to be with Jesus, Birdie; without any pain, and quite strong again. I think he would love to be there."

Hattie's face was hidden closely with both her hands, as she endeavored to repress her emotion, but the effort was too much, and sobbing aloud, she hid her face in her father's bosom. "He will not die, will he, papa?" she at length enquired.

"He is now striking his golden harp, Hattie," he replied, in broken accents, "and is bright and happy with his Saviour."

With a wild shriek she attempted to spring from her father's arms, but he held her firmly, and placing his cheek upon hers wept convulsively. Again her handkerchief was put in requisition, and his tears carefully wiped away. "Don't cry, dear papa," she said, patting his face with both her hands, and endeavoring to stifle her own grief, "I will try not to make you so sorry;" but again bursting into a flood of tears, she wept unrestrainedly, until perfectly exhausted, she fell asleep.

"Mr. and Mrs. Houston are in the parlor, sir," said Hogan, advancing hesitatingly, a few steps into the library. "Mr. Howard directed me to go for them, and Mr. Ryers desired me to say that he would write immediately for Mr. Mordecai. Shall I take Bird, sir?"

"Let me have her, Major Nesbit," said Miss Ruthven, coming forward from the dining-room. "I have less to do than you, Hogan, and she will be quite content with me on awaking."

"Far more than with me, Miss Julia," he replied, while tears coursed down his cheeks. "It will be hard getting along for any of us, without—" His voice faltered, and brushing his coat sleeve across his face, leaving the sentence unfinished, he hastily left the room.

The sleeping child was resigned to Miss Ruthven,

and Major Nesbit went with Mr. and Mrs. Houston to join the family assembled in the chamber of death. Mrs. Nesbit was seated beside the body, her head resting upon the pillow. She arose as they entered, and advanced to meet them.

"The Lord has given, daughter, the Lord has taken," said Mrs. Houston.

"Blessed be the name of the Lord," whispered Mrs. Nesbit, as, bowed with grief, her head sank upon her mother's shoulder.

"Truly," said Mr. Houston, as he stood gazing upon the face of the departed, "out of the mouth of babes and sucklings, the Lord has ordained strength. Look at that angelic smile; he is evidently holding a communion with seraphs. Truly, their angels behold their Father's face."

Howard entered with noiseless step, as though fearful of disturbing the little sleeper, to say to his sister that Hattie was very desirous that she and her mother would come to her in the nursery. "Julia is with her, and has succeeded in partially calming her, but her great anxiety is to see her dear sister and mother."

A look passed between Howard and Miss Houston, as he lingered while the rest of the family repaired to the nursery.

"I will see that all is arranged properly, Howard. Send Julia Ruthven to me."

Without replying, Howard left the room, and in a few moments Miss Ruthven joined his aunt.

Knowing that his mother would prefer that no stranger should touch the body of her little boy, she resolved, with the assistance of the domestics and Miss Ruthven, to arrange it before their return to the chamber. He was clothed in a pair of his own night drawers and his hair neatly brushed. The body was then removed to a small apartment, opening into the one in which he died, and laid upon a couch covered with a pure white coverlet. They then repaired to the room where the family were sitting.

The following day Mr. Mordecai arrived, and his

gentle sympathy did much to soothe, and his glowing descriptions of the ransomed spirit, produced a realizing sense that temporal afflictions were indeed light, if they worked out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory and even little Hattie, while sitting upon his knee, beside her brother's body, would wipe away her tears as he told her of the joys of heaven, the love of Housie's Saviour, and the sweet home she, in a little while, would find there also. "I came," said Mr. Houston, "hoping to be a staff to the bereaved, but the sense of my own loss has rendered me a broken reed."

The dreaded hour has at length arrived when called to part with all that remains of the dearly loved one; that clay tabernacle must now be sepulchred in the tomb until the last trump shall sound in the resurrection morn. A last look has been taken, the last kiss given, the lid is closed, the friends congregate to pay the last tribute to the departed. Dr. Irving conducted the services at the house. Eight boys, playmates of Houston, at their own request, bore him to the carriage, and, to the surprise and gratification of all who saw it, Hogan entered the carriage and rode beside the body to the burial ground, where the youth again met it, and conveyed it to its last resting place.

The females of the family attended, with the exception of Mrs. Nesbit, who was prevented by violent nervous headache. Miss Ruthven remained with her at home.

No one who has experienced the bitter feeling of desolation on returning to the home after placing a loved one in the tomb, will fail to sympathise with the bereaved under the same circumstances.

"It would indeed be a consolation to us all, Lemuel, if you could remain a few days with us," said Major Nesbit, as toward evening he sat with Mr. Mordecai in the library.

"It is my intention to do so," he replied. "If I can in any way mitigate the grief of my dearest friends, I shall consider time well spent, and the society of

those, to whom, but for circumstances entirely unforeseen, I would have been allied by the closest ties, must be to me far more grateful than pursuing a round of college duties. May I not look upon you in the light of a father, Major Nesbit?"

"Happy am I, dear Lemuel, to add you to my list of children."

"God is good, Major Nesbit. Little did I suppose, when sheltered from the pelting storm on that eventful night, that I should here be taught the way of life, and here receive an earthly boon for which I have no words to express my gratitude."

"And I feel well satisfied, should I be called, to resign Marion to such a protector. In the prospect of a son, such as Lemuel Mordecai, and a daughter, such as Julia Ruthven, I feel I am blessed indeed."

Mr. Mordecai, with a look of gratitude, pressed his hand warmly. "Julia Ruthven is a noble woman," he replied, "and the best balanced character, save one, I have ever known. With a fine intellect, she is entirely simple-hearted. Then her affable manner charms all who know her. She will make an inimitable wife for Howard. Has Mrs. Ruthven yet consented to relinquish housekeeping? Julia will have double duty now that Emilie is away."

"There is a great change in her circumstances. She will be obliged to do so. In the course of three months, they will probably occupy the adjoining cottage."

"No! Why was I not informed of so important a matter?"

"The illness of our little boy has so absorbed us, that for the time it was lost to view."

The entrance of Miss Ruthven, Marion and Cornelia, turned the conversation.

"Where is Bird?" enquired Mr. Mordecai.

"Lying beside her mother," replied Miss Ruthven. "She has not stirred from her side all day, and has refused any sustenance, saying that when mamma is better, she will come down stairs with her. Howard

is trying to interest her and intends remaining with her through the evening."

"I will take his place," said Major Nesbit, rising, "and allow him to join you in the library."

Mr. Mordecai and Miss Ruthven remained during the following week, and little Hattie, although missing Houston hourly, was often beguiled, and her merry laugh might be heard as some pleasant little tale was related by their guests purposely to amuse her. But the time came for their departure, "As Mr. Mordecai must get more learning," Hattie said, "to preach the Gospel to the poor, and dear Miss Julia must go to her poor sick mamma."

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## CHAPTER XVI.

"A low name is a thorn in the side,  
That hindereth the footman in his running ;  
But a name of ancestral renown,  
Shall often put the racer to his speed."

"MAMMA," said Cornelia ; "old Mr. Graham starts for the capital in a few days, with Susan and Anna. They have invited me to accompany them ; shall I do so ?"

"Would it be your wish, daughter, to enter already into the gaieties of a city ?"

"I do not desire to enter its gaieties, mamma ; but consistently with my mourning dress, I may visit any place of public resort ; custom only prohibits all private visiting for a year."

"A most arbitrary custom, my child ; feeling, not fashion, should govern there. A visit made to a kind, sympathizing friend, is often very soothing."

"Oh ! yes, mamma ; we may visit very intimate friends, without infringing rules ; for instance, I, without hesitation, pass a day or two with the Misses Graham."

"Yes, Nellie," returned Major Nesbit; "I have observed in the last fortnight, since our desolate house required all its members to offer their portion of consolation, you have been absent ten days with the Misses Graham."

"And a more giddy, light, trifling set of girls, can scarcely be found," rejoined Howard; "and, Nellie, in walking, I often meet them with very inferior looking persons."

"Do be consistent, Howard; only yesterday you professed to despise aristocratic views."

"I have no reference to rank, but their bearing is decidedly vulgar, and the conduct of the Misses Grahams in the street is very reprehensible. The voices of the whole party may be heard for half a square."

"They seldom admit any without good credentials," rejoined Radcliff; "but many of their escorts are of foreign extraction, and do not fall in with your precise, stiff-starched notions."

"If Nellie were my daughter, instead of sister," said Howard, "her last visit had been paid to the house of Mr. Graham. From one in the morning until ten at night, their house is filled with gentlemen, certainly not proper associates for her; and I warn you, Nellie, to shun their society, whatever you and Radcliff may think of my stiff-starched views. For your sake I have had my eye on those young ladies for a long time. The freedom of manner they allow and practice toward gentlemen, is calculated to shock any one brought up as you have been."

"They are going to the capital with their father," said Radcliff; "there can, therefore, be no difficulty."

"I am going, in two or three weeks, southward with mother, Aunt Harriet, Marion, and the Misses Ruthvens; why not wait until then and accompany us?"

"I prefer going with Mr. Graham; I have the means; my six months' stock is due, and I have resolved to do so."

"Then you go without permission, daughter," replied

Major Nesbit; "or rather, with my express disapprobation."

"I go on any terms, father," she replied, rising to leave the room; "my obedience has never been appreciated; I may, therefore, as well be my own mistress. To be under the government of Howard is by no means pleasant." Closing the door quickly after her, she went to her own chamber and there remained until the hour for dinner.

"Will you walk with us to the Grotto, Nellie, this afternoon," enquired Marion, resolving not to notice the cloud upon her brow; "the children and I are going over to enjoy the cool breeze, and refresh ourselves from the water of the spring."

"My thirst can be readily allayed by ice-water," she replied, coldly; "and as to walking among dried leaves, I perfectly abhor it."

"Why, sister," enquired Hattie; "where were you going yesterday afternoon, when I met you in the road walking with that black-whiskered gentleman?" The eye of Cornelia fell as Howard looked anxiously towards her.

"You didn't see me, did you, sister? You and the gentleman were so busy talking. Who was it, sister? I never saw him before."

"You never heard of him, Birdie," she replied, coloring deeply; "and little girls shouldn't talk so much," she added, in a low voice.

Hattie forbore all further remark, but, as was her wont when any repulse was given to her too sensitive nature, found her way into the lap of Marion, and buried her head closely in her bosom. The meal passed in perfect silence. Shortly after, Cornelia was seen with her bonnet and shawl thrown over her arm, slowly walking down the lawn. The eye of Howard anxiously followed her from the window. He turned as his father spoke: "Howard, you do not seem yourself to-day. Has anything occurred to harass you, my son?"

"Nothing has really happened, I trust, father, but

my anxiety about Nellie is unaccountable. Last night, I slept little, owing to my uneasiness. I fear there is something wrong; her manner for the last few days has been confused, her step hurried, and her air altogether as though she intended bidding defiance to parental authority."

"You alarm me, Howard! exceedingly alarm me."

"I feel there is cause for it, father, unless we can arrest the growing evil."

"Go to Mr. Graham's immediately, Howard, and say to Cornelia that I desire at once to see her."

"More heed would be given to the message through Hogan; I should be considered its dictator."

The messenger returned: Miss Cornelia was not there, nor had been for several days.

"I heard Marion ask her whether she were not well, as so much time the last few days had been spent in her chamber."

"I recollect it, father, and was surprised at the confusion Nellie manifested at so simple a question. Three days since, she asked me for twenty dollars, for which she said she had immediate use."

Major Nesbit made no reply, but taking his hat, went immediately out. Howard followed. At the door of Mr. Graham, enquiry was again made, but no tidings obtained. After calling at several houses, and passing through many of the lanes and byways, they returned home, with an undefined feeling of uneasiness.

As the day closed in, the anxiety of her father became insupportable, and with Radcliff and Howard, he again wandered out to make some discovery, if possible.

"Lucetta Field may be able to give some information," said Radcliff, "she is generally posted up in all news, true or untrue; a thorough village gossip."

The door was opened by Miss Field herself when they rang for admittance. "My daughter Cornelia left home this afternoon, Miss Field," said Major Nesbit, assuming an indifferent manner, "without saying where

she intended staying. Is she taking a cup of tea with your?"

"No, indeed! Miss Cornelia cut me long since; the friend of Miss Kate Spencer could not condescend to plain Lucetta Field."

"Then you can give no tidings of her?"

"Just after dinner, I saw her pass with the same gentleman who has escorted her daily for the last two months; they were talking earnestly and Miss Nesbit was quite agitated. Feeling some curiosity, I followed her at a distance. They went into Mr. Graham's. In about fifteen minutes, a carriage drove up; several trunks were placed upon it, and Miss Nesbit, in a riding habit, and covered closely with a veil, came out and entered it, followed by the same gentleman. After giving some directions to the driver, the door was quickly closed. They went off with the speed of lightning, and by this time must be beyond all pursuit."

"We will return home, father," whispered Howard, placing his arm within his, to prevent his falling; "in this agitated state, you could do nothing. Let Radcliff and me make all necessary enquiries."

Suffering himself to be led by his sons, he sank, almost fainting, on the step of the piazza. Marion, hearing footsteps, with a face swollen with weeping, came to meet them.

"Howard, dear Howard!" she exclaimed, throwing herself beside her father, "What have you heard? Where is Cornelia?"

"I fear the worst, daughter," replied Major Nesbit, "but time will reveal."

"It may not be too late, father," said Howard, "I know the only route they can pursue. Radcliff, get the horses saddled immediately, we may yet overtake them. A warrant must then be obtained, if force prove necessary."

"Tell me the worst, Howard," said Marion, in a tone of agony, springing up and seizing his arm. "Her clothes must have been received by some one below at

night, as her drawers are empty. I fear she has ruined herself forever."

The sad story was soon told by Major Nesbit, after the departure of his sons, and Marion, with Mrs. Nesbit and her father, awaited, with agonized feelings, a confirmation of their fearful forebodings.

The sad face of Howard, as they returned at one o'clock, was a sufficient attestation of their ill success. Radcliff threw himself into a chair at the extremity of the room, saying, "I am exceedingly fatigued after our fool's errand."

Howard, without speaking, slowly removed his gloves, and, placing them with his hat upon the table, seated himself beside his mother.

"Is anything brought to light, my son?" she enquired.

"The steamer for Liverpool sailed from Varastone fifteen minutes before our arrival. Persons answering the description of Miss Field, remained at Laud's hotel several hours before embarking, and left this note with Mr. Herman, to be sent to Major Nesbit. I have not unsealed it, father, as it is addressed to you."

Major Nesbit took it, examined the superscription several times, then returning it said: "Break the seal, my son; I cannot."

Seating himself upon the corner of the sofa, he buried his face in his hands, while Howard read as follows:—

"'MY DEAR PARENTS:

Circumstances have obliged me most reluctantly to act without consulting you, knowing that your consent to my alliance with any but a Protestant would be withheld. Baron Forsythe is a gentleman of rank, well known in the highest circles of Europe, and on the most intimate terms with the King of Prussia. He has several times been presented to Queen Victoria, and other crowned heads. We were united two days since. At present, our intention is to travel for a few months, and return to Varastone for a short season

before finally settling on a large landed estate belonging to the Baron, in one of the independent divisions of Germany. Although a Catholic by birth, he has very liberal views, and will leave me entirely unbiassed. A letter addressed to Robert Forsythe, Baronet, will reach us at Liverpool, or addressed to the care of the Duke of Ormando, will be forwarded to us. I anticipate a most delightful trip, but shall feel far more comfortable after receiving your forgiveness.

Most affectionately,

C. FORSYTHE."

"Wretched infatuation," exclaimed Radcliff; "an arch deceiver, without the slightest doubt. She has brought utter disgrace upon her house by this rash step."

"I fear you are right," replied Howard. "But the blight upon her own future welfare is of far more importance than any disgrace that may attach to us. There is little doubt the name is feigned. Cornelia has been dazzled by glittering titles."

"I feel the disgrace quite as sensibly as any unhappiness accruing to her from this high-handed measure," said Radcliff. "That she richly deserves."

"Let us commend Nellie and ourselves to Him who is a never-failing help in time of trouble," said Major Nesbit. "Let us plead for divine strength, that the silvered hairs of her parents may not be brought with sorrow to the grave by this calamity. He may yet open a way for the return of our dear prodigal."

They knelt; the prayer of Major Nesbit, at first in broken accents, soon ceased altogether, and a stifled sob alone was heard. After a long silence, Howard concluded in a deeply solemn manner, supplicating the richest spiritual blessings upon his stricken parents, and imploring mercy for the dear wanderer, that all her waywardness might be overruled for good, and might lead her to see the error of her ways, and bring her yet into the fold of the Great Shepherd.

"Your mother and I will now retire," said Major

Nesbit. "Our erring daughter must be restored to the bosom of her family; and to you, my sons, I look for untiring effort to discover her retreat."

"That letter does not throw the slightest light upon it, father," replied Radcliff, "all attempts at discovery would prove fruitless."

"I solemnly promise, father," said Howard, "whatever difficulties may beset my path, neither effort nor expense shall be spared to restore Nellie to her home; she will need and will gladly seek our protection, I doubt not."

"You will only give publicity to the affair, Howard, by unavailing enquiry," remarked Radcliff, "and bring an indelible stain upon us."

"You always impart comfort, Howard," said his father, without noticing the unfeeling remark of Radcliff; "to-morrow we will talk over the best method of proceeding. Come, Marion, daughter."

"Presently, father, I will remain a few moments longer." The door closed, Marion, Howard, and Radcliff were left alone.

"Howard," said his sister, "the name of Baron Forsythe is not unknown to you; your manner betrays it."

"The person who has assumed that title, Marion, has not the slightest claim to that of gentleman. In the stage I accidentally overheard a conversation not intended for my ears; that is the obvious reason why he has never appeared among us. His companion I should again recognize."

"It is all explained," said Radcliff, when the incident was related, "I have often marvelled that a gentleman whom I constantly met at Mr. Grahams' should always rise to take leave as I entered, without a passing introduction. His appearance was by no means distingué; I supposed, for that reason, he was not brought into notice, and never remarked upon it. I never considered the taste of Nellie decidedly refined."

"There has always been so much similarity in your character, and that of Nellie," replied Howard, piqued

at the remark, "that I am surprised at such a sentiment from you."

"Whatever traits we may have in common, Howard, my family will never be disgraced by my union."

"Nellie is more simple-hearted," was the reply, "and would be more easily beguiled. The fatal error is committed, Radcliff, our duty is plain; to remedy it as far, and as quickly as possible."

"Your duty, if you think proper," returned Radcliff, rising to leave the room, "I will be slow in lending my aid to bring mortification and disgrace upon our house." The door was held for a moment, expecting a reply, but Howard, without noticing him, turned to Marion. "You will be ill dear Marion, you must retire." With a heavy heart, she took the lamp he had lighted for her, and went to her own chamber. Early dawn appeared ere Howard sought his pillow. A thousand plans were formed and abandoned; the way was hedged with difficulties, but Howard Nesbit was never known to relax an effort, when duty called. His first step should be to see Mr. Graham. "He shall throw light upon my path," he murmured, "if the arm of the law has any power, although that shall be my last resort." The sun had not risen far above the horizon, when his hand was upon the bell of Mr. Graham.

"He is not yet up, sir," was the reply of the servant, to his enquiry.

"What is his hour for rising?"

"We breakfast at eight o'clock."

"I will await him in the parlor."

"Shall I say to him you are here, sir?"

"Certainly you may, and that my business is urgent."

The man returned, there was a smile playing upon his face, notwithstanding his efforts to conceal it, as he said, "Mr. Graham is not at home, sir; I was mistaken. He, Mr. Thomas, and Mrs. Graham started early for the country, I believe, and their return is uncertain."

"Have the Miss Grahams left home also?"

"No, sir.—Yes, sir.—I cannot tell. Shall I enquire, sir?"

"You appear to be very ignorant of the movements of your master's household," replied Howard, coldly. "Let me have pen and ink; I will leave a note for Mr. Graham."

"You will walk into the library, sir; there you will find every convenience for writing."

The servant stood, awaiting further orders, but finding his services were no longer required, retired, leaving Howard to his own reflections and surmises.

Fifteen minutes passed; the paper lay before him untouched. "Written communication is impossible," he at length said, rising from the table. "I must and will obtain an interview, notwithstanding all his efforts to elude me."

As he was about leaving the library, his attention was arrested by approaching footsteps; as they drew nearer the voices of Mr. Graham and his son were recognized.

"This is an ugly business, Tom; we shall have some trouble yet, I fear."

"Give yourself no anxiety, father; Rad Nesbit has too much care for the dignity of his family to permit any unavoidable expose."

"But this Howard takes hold of every thing in good earnest, and his very eye looks through a man at once."

"Well! well! Miss Nellie, rather Mrs. the Baroness is now beyond pursuit, and all knowledge of her or hers can be positively"—the sentence was left unfinished.

An exclamation from his father interrupted it, as he preceded him into the library. Seeing the cause of his embarrassment he hastily retreated.

"Good morning, Mr. Nesbit, good morning, sir," said Mr. Graham, endeavoring to conceal his confusion; "take a seat, sir. To what am I indebted for the honor of this early visit?"

"The knowledge that the welfare of a dear sister is at stake," replied Howard, coldly bowing, "might seem

a sufficient reason to Mr. Graham for this otherwise untimely visit."

"Certainly, certainly. You are welcome at all hours, sir. Will you not walk into the breakfast room and take a cup of coffee with us?"

"Thank you, my present business admits of no delay. I should be obliged to you for the address of the gentleman who introduced Baron Forsythe into this family?"

"Certainly," replied Mr. Graham, much relieved, "Mr. Thomas Jones. He is a stranger in these parts, but an intimate friend of Mr. Laurette; and received into the best society of Varastone. He is at present staying with Mr. Maurisse, out of town."

"It must have been quite four o'clock when my sister left your house yesterday, was it not, sir?"

"Left where?—I do not quite comprehend."

"I have positive evidence, Mr. Graham, that my sister, in a travelling dress, left your house, with a stranger yesterday. As she is under age, you are aware you are amenable to the law for furthering, or conniving at this elopement."

"You certainly would not resort to any method so disgraceful, Mr. Nesbit," replied Mr. Graham evidently alarmed,

"My father will approve any course that will tend to restore his daughter to her home. Under the assumed title of Baron, I fear her confidence has been sadly abused."

"Why do you say assumed, Mr. Nesbit? his bearing was certainly inconsistent with the propagation of such a falsehood, and Mr. Jones had letters from intimate friends respecting him."

"Did you see them?"

"No. It is not usual to regard your friends with such distrust, that their word requires a voucher."

"Is Mr. Jones furnished with credentials also, or is his own word his testimony?"

"He is my friend," was the haughty reply.

"Notwithstanding that distinction, sir, you will pardon my questioning his standing in society."

"Whatever may be his position, is of no moment to me, neither would I wish to be any other than neutral in this matter."

A stern look was the only reply. Mr. Graham colored. "Of course, as a friend, I will privately render every service in my power to a family I so much respect."

An expression of contempt passed across the face of Howard, but he only said, "Where did Mr. Jones stay when at Grangeville?"

"At the Vulcan."

"Then I will at once make enquiry there," said Howard, rising and bowing coldly. "It will certainly be your duty, Mr. Graham, to repair this evil as far as lies in your power. You have daughters, sir. Would a similar sacrifice, on your part, be hailed with pleasure?"

"I will walk over with you, Mr. Nesbit," he replied, evidently moved. Mr. Jones had left the Vulcan that day; had sailed for Vesinore.

"Do you know whether he resides there?" Howard enquired of the barkeeper.

"No, sir. He will join Baron Forsythe there, remain a few weeks, return to Varastone, and then I believe sail for Europe. Will you see Mr. Buck, sir? Perhaps he can give you further information." A dark scowl from the proprietor, (as he obeyed the summons and stood before Howard,) was the only reply to his question relative to his late inmate, and turning immediately from him he re-entered the parlor. Howard looked perplexed; but being aware that pecuniary consideration would have great weight with the landlord, concluded he had been bribed to secrecy, and without seeking any further information he returned home, utterly dispirited. Two weeks elapsed; every effort had been made to discover the name of the feigned baron, to no purpose. Deep sadness had taken the place of the usual serenity in the family of Major Nesbit.

"Will Cornelia abandon her family forever?" said Mrs. Nesbit, as she, with Marion, was seated in the library.

"I think Radcliff feels her loss sensibly, mother."

"Only the disgrace, my child; to that he is keenly sensitive. His remarks manifest an angry, not a grieved spirit. How different is Howard's bearing; never the slightest reflection. He feels the consequences will be a sufficient punishment for the imprudence of the step."

At that moment the well known voice of the postman was heard at the hall door. "Miss Marion Nesbit."

"A letter," said Marion, springing from her seat. "Perhaps from Nellie. It is, it is!" she exclaimed, as she looked at the superscription.

The sewing of Mrs. Nesbit fell from her hand as Marion tremblingly broke the seal and read its contents:

"**MY DEAR, MY BELOVED MARION,**

"We are in Vesinore at length, after a boisterous passage of eight days. Baron Forsythe preferred remaining incog during the voyage, fearing (as our republicans are so fond of titled gentlemen) that attention from which a natural reserve induces him to shrink. As the odious name of Barney McFadden was adopted we were not much noticed; but as none of our élite were on board, and as I felt badly about home, I was by no means inclined to make any advances. The Baron is very musical, playing delightfully on the violin. In this way we entertained ourselves during the tedious voyage. My husband wished me to delay writing until our return to Varastone, but I desired to hear from you and make all arrangements to introduce Baron Forsythe, immediately on my arrival, as a son and brother-in-law. He has some business to settle with his friend, the American Consul, which will detain us here six weeks. You may expect us very soon after that period. We have just landed at the steamboat hotel, I can therefore give you no direction, but a letter

addressed to Baron Forsythe, Vesinore, will of course reach us, as I doubt noblemen are very numerous. I dread the calls when the veil is withdrawn.

With much love to all,  
affectionately,  
C. FORSYTHE."

"She has his right name, I fear, mother, in the odious one Barney McFadden;" and Marion almost smiled, yes, smiled through her tears, as the thought arose of such a title for the proud Miss Cornelia Nesbit. "There is a great deal in a name, mother—Barney McFadden"—and she again laughed nervously as she thrilled with mortified feeling.

"Do not dwell upon the name, Marion, dear," said her mother, alarmed at her unwonted excitement. "Let us think only of her eternal welfare; I fear temporally she has a dark prospect."

Marion endeavored to repress her feelings, but finding it impossible, she threw herself into the arms of her mother and gave way to a violent fit of hysterics. By a great effort, however, they soon subsided, and before her father and Howard returned to dinner she had become perfectly calm.

"With your approval, father," said Howard, after carefully reading the letter, "I will at once write to Mr. Maxwell, the Consul, and endeavor to learn the true name of the person in question. Several letters have passed between us on law matters, I therefore am not unknown to him. I am satisfied he will render me any favor in his power, as I have served him gratuitously. The letter was written, but a month of anxious suspense passed ere a reply was received. The apology offered for the delay was the difficulty of obtaining the desired information. Forsythe was a name entirely unknown in those parts, and the only person bearing that of McFadden was a player in the orchestra of the theatre in which he was a manager. On making enquiry of his fellow performers, relative to his character, said the Consul, "I find he is a man of low moral sense

and little respected by them. As I understand, he has no conscience in regard to incurring debt. If it be the case with you let me know, and I will oblige him to give you a note on the company who owe him something at present. I shall be gratified to have an opportunity of returning, although in a very slight degree, some of the kind offices which you have rendered to your humble servant.

Every avenue to hope was now closed. What step should be taken?

"Let Barney, or Mrs. Barney McFadden enter these doors," said Radcliff, "I seek a home elsewhere."

"You will not close the doors against Nellie, father?" enquired Marion, anxiously.

"No, daughter, never while I have a home to offer her; but the man who has deceived her, shall never be permitted to enter them. She will gladly seek refuge with us."

Mrs. Nesbit made no remark; her head was bowed, and her countenance showed the deepest sadness.

"My duty is plain," said Howard; "I must immediately sail for Vesinore, learn the residence of Cornelia, and bring her home with me at any cost."

"At some cost of reputation, I should judge," said Radcliff, contemptuously.

"At whatever cost," replied Howard, sternly. "To rescue Nellie from the hands of a villain, is an object of no small moment. Early to-morrow morning the 'Mary' sails. I must secure a passage this afternoon. Hogan can be sent for that purpose."

"But the court sits in ten days, my son."

"I hope to return in three weeks, father; I will endeavor to have my causes postponed. If not, they must be resigned into other hands."

"If my opinion had a particle of weight here," said Radcliff, rising impatiently to leave the room, "I should give it that Mr. and Mrs. McFadden be bribed to remain on foreign shores, at whatever cost, rather than put forth effort to bring them nearer home."

"Your advice savors little of the spirit of the gospel,

my son," said Mrs. Nesbit, "and eschews all natural affection."

"Affection must be based upon respect, mother," he replied, looking back as he held the partly open door; "without self-respect, I should even abhor myself."

"Poor fellow," remarked his father, as the door closed; "what wonders grace would effect on that heart. He is truly benighted."

A deep sigh escaped Mr. Nesbit. Marion withdrew with Howard, to assist in packing for the intended voyage.

A few days only had elapsed after his departure, when a stranger enquired for Mrs. Nesbit.

"My name, Delacroix, is probably unknown to you, Mrs. Nesbit," he said, "but a letter was placed in my hands when about sailing from Vesinore, by a young lady who came on board, with a request that I should deliver it myself into your hands. Her distressed appearance at once interested me, and I resolved to fulfil the commission to the letter. As I am master of a vessel sailing between here and that place, if you have any commissions, I return next week, and would be happy to execute them."

"If you would give me your address, sir," she replied, endeavoring to conceal the emotion excited by his intelligence; "Mr. Nesbit will call, and avail himself of your kind offer."

The address was given, the stranger departed, and Mrs. Nesbit joined Marion, who was awaiting her anxiously in the library.

"This is not Nellie's writing, mother," said Marion, sick with disappointment, as she slowly opened the envelope; "this is a poor scrawl, unlike her clear and beautiful hand." Marion was mistaken; it was indeed the writing of her sister, but so blotted with tears as to be almost unintelligible. It began thus:

"MY BELOVED MARION.

Oh, that I had a home; that I could once more reach that blessed spot in Grangeville, which I never fully

appreciated. I am a prisoner in a strange city; living in a low, miserable hotel, having no name, in a poor, mean street; closely watched by that hateful being calling himself Baron Forsythe, lest I should communicate with you. He has involved himself deeply in debt, has spent all my stock, which I sold before leaving Varastone, and is now endeavoring to shield himself from justice, which I trust may soon overtake him. Let Howard make some effort to release me. Send me a letter by the captain, who will hand you this. I will find means to see him on his return. I would have thrown myself on his protection, but my purse is empty, and my story rather incredible. My brain is reeling; I cannot connect another sentence."

It was without signature.

The following day, Major Nesbit brought Captain Delacroix to dine, for the purpose of obtaining every information possible in regard to the present condition of Cornelia.

"It was almost dark," he said, "when I perceived a female standing at the entrance of the boat. Her position was so doubtful, at that hour, that I felt inclined to permit her to remain without notice; but, on examining more closely, her wan and haggard appearance indicated only distress. 'Are you the captain of this boat?' she enquired, in a tremulous voice, as I advanced to meet her; 'I am.' 'Do you sail for Varastone?' 'I do.' 'Will you, then, favor me by delivering this letter into the hand of Major or Mrs. Nesbit? They live three miles from the city.' 'In Grangeville,' I replied; 'I will do so with pleasure.' 'Then you know them,' she said, the crimson mounting to her cheeks. 'Not personally,' I replied, 'but well by reputation.' 'When will you sail again from this port?' 'In about a month.' 'A month,' she repeated sadly. 'Can I do anything for you?' I at length ventured to say. She made no reply, but walked hastily from the vessel. As the light from the lamp fell directly upon her, I thought I had never seen any one more beautiful. I followed, feeling quite

an interest in my mysterious visitor; but her rapid pace eluded all pursuit, and turning down a small street in the lower part of the city, she was soon lost to view, and I returned to my vessel, much impressed with the incident."

The recital of Captain Delacroix only increased the anguish concerning their erring child, without throwing any light that would enable them to afford her relief, and they awaited with the deepest anxiety, tidings through Howard.

On landing at Vesinore, Howard's first care was to enquire for the residence of the consul. He was received with the utmost hospitality, and accepted his kind invitation to become his guest, while he remained. But of Mr. McFadden, he could learn nothing that was satisfactory. For some misdemeanor, he had been dismissed the orchestra, and had retired deeply in debt, none knew whither. In vain an advertisement was placed in every daily paper, asking him to call at the house of the consul, on important business. In vain enquiry was made at every hotel and boarding-house. Two weeks passed without any tidings, excepting from home, and Howard, sick at heart, was ready almost to abandon the search as hopeless. The story was at length reluctantly related to his friend, with the hope that some strenuous measures might be suggested, if he were aware of its momentous importance. With the greatest interest, he listened to the recital. "Why did you not at once inform me, Nesbit?" he said, "I supposed it merely some business transaction. It was no time for secrecy. Your sister must return with you to Varastone,—and she shall," he added, emphatically, "if the rascal still remain in Vesinore. He will not escape my vigilance." A reward of five hundred dollars was the next day offered for the detection of Barney McFadden, with the signature of the consul, and placed in every daily paper. On the same evening, a woman evidently in the lower walks of life, called and requested to see the consul. She was shown into the library where he and Mr. Nesbit were sitting.

"Are you the gentleman, sir, that wanted to see Mr. Barney McFadden?"

"The same. Can you tell me any thing about him?"

"Well, sir, I'm a lone woman, makin' my livin' by takin' in boarders and lodgers, and wouldn't like to spile my prospects by turnin' informant. Will I be told on, sir?"

"You are perfectly safe, in so far as I am concerned, good woman. Is Mr. McFadden with you at present?"

"If I told, sir, when would I get the reward?"

"When Mr. McFadden is found."

"Then, he is at my house with a lady—yes, a real lady, locked up in one of my rooms. He always carries up her food, and keeps the key in his pocket."

"If you can effect the escape of that lady," said Howard, much excited, "another hundred shall be added to the sum offered."

"Mr. McFadden is out this evening, sir."

"I will accompany you home," said Howard, rising, and seizing his hat.

"And I will follow," rejoined Mr. Maxwell, rubbing his hands with exultation, "when my forces are mustered." Three officers of justice were immediately summoned. The woman giving them accurate directions to her house, left them and proceeded homeward, fearing detection. Several dark miserable streets were traversed before they came to a large dilapidated looking building, surrounded by low wooden hovels. The street, or alley, bore the appearance of the utmost poverty. A number of little dirty urchins, drawn together by the unusual sight of gentlemen in their vicinity, and squalid filthy looking women, peering upon them from the doors and windows, gave an additional coloring to the picture.

The door was opened by a little boy, who alarmed at the sight of officers, endeavored again to close it, crying, "Constables, mammy! constables!" The foot of Howard was however planted—the door forced open, and the whole party entered. Sitting around a table, in a large, poorly furnished room, were six or eight

sailors, playing at cards, a bottle of whiskey was placed before them, of which they had partaken freely. The woman of the house was sitting beside a stand, mending an old coat, which had already been adorned with patches of every hue. Raising a small farthing candle as the gentlemen entered, she scanned them narrowly, as though she had never before seen them. The cards were immediately thrown aside, and the men arose with wonder depicted on their countenances.

"We desire to be shown to the room of Mr. McFadden," said Howard.

"Mr. McFadden is not in this house," replied the hostess, "he doesn't board here any longer."

"The room which he once occupied, must be shown us at once," said Howard; "officer, produce your warrant for searching the premises." The warrant was shown, and the woman sullenly replied, "Well, if I must, I must; follow me, but the door is locked, and the key is in his pocket."

"I always thought it a shame, the fellow confined the gal so close," whispered one of the men to his companion, "and if my help is wanting, I'm thinking my name's not Jack Robinson, but I'll be free to give it." This hint was not lost upon the policeman; "Come along then, Mr. Robinson," he said, tapping him upon the shoulder, "your services may be needed, and will no doubt, be amply repaid by these gentlemen."

"I want no pay—not I," he returned, springing up the stairs with the greatest alacrity, "I'll help the gal with all my heart, and if keys are lacking, my shoulder will soon show the inside of the room."

"Thank you, my good fellow," returned Mr. Maxwell, "we have brought keys, which, I hope, will render all service of that kind unnecessary. If, however, we are mistaken, we will certainly apply the instrument you propose."

While in the act of fitting the lock, a loud voice was heard below, "Let me up this instant, you rascals of jacktars. Do you detain a gentleman, against his will?"

"We want you to try your strength a little here, Mr. McFadden, said one of the party, "you'll need considerable above, with Jack at their head, they muster strong."

"This instant, free me, or I will level you with the earth," he cried, in a tone of fury.

"Easier said than done, friend McFadden; such delicate gentlemen can't do much in the hands of five tarpaulins. Hurrah for the gentlemen above stairs, hurrah! hurrah!"

Before any effort was made to relieve his sister, Howard took the precaution to call several times through the key hole, fearing to alarm her, but receiving no answer, he wrote his name in large letters, and forced it through. There was, however, not the slightest recognition, or sound within. Mr. Robinson, was leaning over the balustrade, heartily laughing at the unavailing efforts of the prisoner below; but seeing all attempts to enter the room had proved fruitless, he came forward, and placing his shoulder against the door, in one instant, it flew open, and displayed the clothes of Cornelia, some of them recognized in a moment by Howard, scattered in every direction. Cornelia was not there; the disappointment of Howard, can scarcely be imagined.

"Let Mr. McFadden come up immediately," said Mr. Maxwell.

The order was obeyed, and he appeared, with a face flushed with rage and indignation.

"By what right, is my privacy intruded upon?" he enquired, haughtily.

"Your privacy might have remained unmolested forever," replied Howard, "had you not interfered with the rights of others."

"The right of none is infringed in my lawful marriage with your sister, and if you have removed her from these premises, I, as her natural protector, demand her at your hand."

"Such subterfuge will not avail you, sir. If my

sister, is not immediately restored to her family, the arm of the law will compel you to relinquish her."

"I fully believe, Mr. Nesbit, she is in your charge; your finesse cannot blind me. One hour since, she occupied this room; her detention, has caused me great pain, but was unavoidable. Next week, I intend sailing for Europe, she will there find a far different home."

"Officers, do your duty," said Howard, without deigning a reply to this sally; "let the house be searched thoroughly."

"We have a warrant of another nature," said the officer, tapping Mr. McFadden on the shoulder. "You are our prisoner, sir."

"Prisoner! For what?"

"In default of the payment of some odd thousands for jewelry, broadcloth, &c."

The cheek of Mr. McFadden was blanched, his whole demeanor, at once changed. Turning to Howard, in a tremulous voice, he said, "As this indebtedness is, in a measure, owing to my desire of pleasing your sister, Mr. Nesbit, I might reasonably suppose, some measures would be taken to release me from so onerous a burden."

"Place my sister in my charge," was the reply, "some compromise may then be thought of."

"I have not the ability to do so, believe me; if not in this house, her place of concealment is unknown to me."

"Will you be willing to sign papers of separation, in lieu of some emolument?"

"I ought to have a life estate in a portion of my wife's property, when she becomes of age."

"The stock, to the value of one thousand dollars, which you sold on leaving Varastone, comprises the whole of her estate, either held, or in expectation."

"No! Is it possible? Are you not deceiving me? It is the general impression she will receive eighty thousand dollars."

"Your informants erred," replied Howard, coldly.

"It would certainly be very painful to me, to sign papers of separation ; but, if Mrs. McFadden feels so much regret in the selection of a partner, I might be induced to make some arrangements for her greater satisfaction."

Mrs. McFadden ! How the appellation thrilled through the ear of Howard. Mrs. McFadden ! Had his sister, indeed, fallen so low ? He fully realized it, and every pulse throbbed with mortification. Much however, was to be effected ; his sister's happiness was at stake, and the man had every thing in his power, he therefore, only enquired, "Has my sister still the sum she brought with her ?"

"No," he replied hesitatingly, "most unforeseen events transpired to oblige us to part with it. I had hoped soon to be able to refund it."

"On what terms will you be willing to relinquish all claims to her forever ?"

"If two thousand could be added to the one already received, I would acquiesce in any proposition you wished to make."

"When she is under my protection, we will talk over this matter."

"For the night," said the consul, "we will leave you here, in charge of these officers. A room with a fastening, must be obtained ; to-morrow if she be not found, you will be held accountable."

"If you're a mind, gentlemen," said Mr. Robinson, stepping forward, and twirling a large trunk as though it had been a feather, "Jim and I will just right this rigging that seems mightily capsized in the lady's hurry, and ship them off to any port you'll please to mention."

"A happy thought of yours my good fellow," replied the consul. "Let every thing be carefully arranged in the trunk, and carried to my house for safe keeping."

"Come, Mrs. Dougherty," called the sailor, lend a hand to fix these things plumb, our rough fingers are not used to such dainty work ; rough and tumble won't do here."

The woman, with an evident look of disappointment slowly obeyed.

"Turn out the drawers, Jim, may be you'll come athwart something else."

"The bureau was never used by Miss McFadden," said Mrs. Dougherty, darting an angry look at her lodgers, "no use searching there."

Mrs. Dougherty's counsel was, however, quite unheeded, and each drawer was opened, until a small beautiful box was brought to light, recognized at once by Howard as his gift to his sister. It was locked.

Silently placing it in his pocket, he and his friend proceeded down stairs, after seeing the trunk carefully packed, locked and placed upon the shoulders of the kind-hearted sailor, who travelled on as carelessly as though he scarcely felt his burden. His frank, pleasant manner attracted Howard as much as his strength surprised him, and he felt how much such a man would do if his mind were directed into the proper channel.

The consul, having some business to transact, left them. "Your strength is remarkable, Mr. Robinson," said Howard, as they proceeded along together.

"I have roughed it, your honor, all my life," he replied, "never had a chance of getting dainty."

"It must have required much roughing," Howard remarked, "for such a heart as yours to be satisfied with your present home."

A shade passed over his brow, as he replied, "A seafaring man knows little of home, your honor, when he's off ship."

"And is there so much home-feeling, when upon the deep waters?"

The man shook his head. "I loosed my moorings ten years ago, when mother died," he said, mournfully; "I was then a lad of fourteen, steered close along side of her while she lived; her last words I'll never forget: 'Make Jesus your friend, Jack, and you'll never need another.'" Brushing a tear hastily from his weather-beaten cheek, he continued, "For weeks I read my Bible, but somehow soon cast anchor among the

breakers, and couldn't see the land ahead she talked about."

"But had you none left to take you by the hand, after you lost your mother?"

"None. I stayed till the last moment. I followed her to the public burying-ground. The sexton and undertaker only were present. I saw the coffin lowered. The last spade of dirt was thrown in. I heard their last footsteps. I was alone; even these men didn't speak a word of comfort to me. I knelt upon the new made grave, and swore to devote my first earnings to giving her a better resting place. I kept that vow; and she now lays in a country churchyard, with room left for her son, at the side of her, should he die in port."

"And would you not also wish to rise with her in the resurrection," enquired Howard.

"It's hard steering against the wind, when the current bears downward," was the reply.

"Yes, but if the wind were favorable, and would take you into a desired haven, would you sail among rocks and breakers? Steer your bark towards the promised land, I warrant your success in entering port."

The young man turned his face full upon him; surprise and gratitude were evident upon his expressive countenance. His lip trembled with agitation as he said, "Had any one ever so much as said, 'Jack, my good fellow,' I should have steered straight through, your honor, but a kind word, except from some poor shipmate, has never met my ear, until you came across me, sir, God bless you." The tears of the poor fellow flowed freely.

"I trust, my dear young man," said Howard, "you are not far from the kingdom of heaven. Study your Bible with prayer, trust in Jesus; let Him be your guide, and you will soon reach the desired harbor." They arrived at the door; the trunk was deposited, and the man about leaving the house, when, turning, he grasped the hand of Howard, saying, "I will seek that land ahead."

"May God speed you," replied Howard, returning

the pressure warmly, "and make you to know the way, the truth, and the life."

The frame of the strong man trembled as he still held the hand of Howard, "I go on shipboard to-morrow, your honor; will it be too free to ask a thought for a poor sailor?"

"Not at all. I will think of, and pray for you daily. In what vessel do you sail?"

"In the Mayday."

"And the captain?"

"I don't know the old man's name; I only shipped with him this morning."

"Will you return and let me know? I would like to hear of you, when absent."

The sailor shook his head doubtfully. "Don't know if I can, sir. We clear at seven, all hands aboard at six; can't leave again without forfeiting the berth."

"To what port are you bound?"

Again the head was shaken. "Don't know, your honor; no odds to the tar where he steers, if there's good grub and steady wages."

Howard smiled. "I shall certainly have an eye to the papers for the Mayday, for your sake, and if you ever come to Varastone, enquire for Mr. Howard Nesbit's office, 42 Lafitte street, and you will have a hearty welcome."

"Many thanks, your honor, and it's a thing I'll not forget either. So good-bye, sir, till chance, or something better brings me to where I feel I shall find a friend."

"That man," said Howard, in relating the incident to Mr. Maxwell, "has a heart worthy a better casket, and may yet be a jewel in the crown of his Redeemer."

The following morning, Howard again proceeded to the house of the prisoner. His manner was somewhat changed, and he seemed willing to come to almost any terms, provided he could be freed from his present irksome bondage, but assured him that he knew nothing of Mrs. McFadden's place of concealment. "My liabilities," he said, "are principally owing to my un-

fortunate connexion. Jewelry to the amount of two thousand dollars was purchased from Hunt & Brothers."

"Let the jewelry be returned," said Howard, coldly, "my sister will not wish the slightest memento of the last three miserable months."

"I did so; but there is still a balance remaining, as a large percentage was demanded for receiving them again."

"It is not necessary to enter into your peculiar situation. It is, of course, a matter of but little moment to me. Sign these papers, and I will give you a promissory note of five hundred dollars, which will be paid when my sister is again under Mr. Nesbit's roof and protection. If you refuse, the court must decide. Your vile deception will scarcely bear the light of day."

"And who held out false colors as well as myself? The property of Mrs. McFadden was certainly not of my imaginings."

A deeply mortified spirit might be seen in the countenance of Mr. Nesbit, but he said not a word. The man's signature was duly placed upon the paper, and without farther notice, omitting even the passing civility of good morning, Howard took his departure.

Two days elapsed without receiving any tidings of Cornelia. Every paper published a missing lady, and large rewards were offered for her recovery. Howard, worn out with fatigue and sorrow, thought of giving up the search as hopeless, when a note was handed him by a stranger.

"I was directed to place this in the hands of Mr. Howard Nesbit," he said, "it was left with me two days since, by my friend, Captain Delacroix."

"Captain Delacroix! Where is he?"

"Sailed for Varastone."

"Why did I not see him?"

"The letter may explain all. Good morning, sir."

The note ran as follows:

"MR. NESBIT:

"DEAR SIR:—On Wednesday morning I sailed for

Varastone, with your sister as a passenger. I thought it better there should be no intercourse between us, as the rascal could then prosecute you as the purloiner of his wife. With much difficulty, I discovered her whereabouts, and by means of a bribe, I obtained access to her through the connivance of the woman of the house, who removed the key from the great coat pocket of Mr. McFadden, while taking his tea, and replaced it again when the steed was stolen. My wife and sister accompany her on her voyage.

“With great respect,

“J. R. DELACROIX.”

The delightful intelligence of his sister's safety, was conveyed immediately to his friend, the consul, and no time was lost in securing a passage on board a vessel expecting to sail on the following Monday. With much regret, he took leave of Mr. Maxwell, his kind host, who accompanied him to the boat, and set sail for Varastone.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

“As worthless, as it seemed  
Intrinsically precious.”

IT was a bleak morning in the month of January. The winds whistled mournfully through the trees surrounding the house of Major Nesbit, and the hail beat pitilessly against the windows of the room where most of the members of the family had collected. The lowering dreary landscape seemed quite in accordance with the sad countenances of this sorrow-smitten group. Death had been there; had taken away one of the lambs of the flock; sadly, very sadly, was this bereavement felt; even the lonely heart of little Hattie, mourned continually for its companion; she was now the object of greatest interest to her mother, who

frequently forgot her own sorrow, in her solicitude to restore cheerfulness to her child. Miss Julia Ruthven was untiring in her endeavors to draw Hattie out of herself, and sometimes succeeded in gaining her consent to pass a few days with her, yet she remarked to Howard, "that it was almost more than she could bear, to witness the occasional bursts of agony, in so young a child, and it was as wonderful to see its suppression in the presence of her playmates" On this morning, the little girl was standing encircled by the arm of her sister, watching the icicles, breaking and falling from the branches, as they bowed to the storm.

"Why are some of the icicles so much longer than the others, sister?"

The reply of Marion was interrupted by the sudden appearance of Howard's little carriage. Hogan led the horse up to the back entrance, tied him to a post, and immediately after put his head in at the door, to say, "all was ready, shall I go with you to drive, sir?" he asked.

"No,—but have everything in readiness to give the horse a comfortable reception on his return, Hogan." The black bowed, and closed the door. "I wonder," continued Major Nesbit, "I wonder if mamma can spare her dear little girl, for a few days, and whether sister can so shield her by warm cloaks, that the cold could not find her. I shall like very much to have her with me this morning."

Hattie turned her large liquid eyes on her father in anxious astonishment, and asked "Where to, papa?" Mrs. Nesbit, at the same instant, exclaimed "Why, Philip! In such a storm! Why is it requisite to go at all?"

"Very urgently necessary," he returned, forcing a smile, "and a note here from Mrs. Ruthven, tells me Ulie and Etta Ryers are spending a week with the children, and greatly desire to have 'Bird' with them; and, if you do not veto, I am very confident my little daughter will go with me; will you dear? Shall Marion get you ready?"

She returned his kiss without replying, and passively placed her hand in that of her sister, who stood awaiting her decision.

"I have gained my object," Major Nesbit remarked, as they left the room; "I do not think it advisable little Hattie should be at home the next few days, and proposed Marion's preparing her to accompany me, as I would prefer she were not present while I tell you and Harriet, Mary, I have tidings of Cornelia."

Miss Houston started. "My wayward, misguided child," murmured Mrs. Nesbit, covering her face with her hands, unable to control her emotion.

"Where is she, brother?" enquired Miss Houston.

"Arrived at Varastone with Delacroix; she is at his house, in a state of extreme excitement, he writes me."

"I hardly thought you would meet her there, Philip," said Mrs. Nesbit; "will it not be a great trial? Why does not Captain Delacroix bring her to Grangeville?"

"Prevented by this storm, but offers and intends doing so to-morrow. I think I had better prevent his witnessing the painful meeting; do you not coincide with me, Mary?"

"I am incapable of giving judgment; in my view yours is usually unerring, Philip, yet this is more than I could have asked or expected of you."

"The self-sacrifice is to your daughter and Marion's sister; I should be very unrelenting but for that remembrance."

"Remember the returning prodigal, brother," said Miss Houston, wiping away the fast-falling tears.

"The penitent spirit of that prodigal would be met with the spirit of his father, Harriet. I could receive this afflictive disgrace gratefully, should it result in the radical improvement of Cornelia's character." The return of the sisters checked further remark.

"Equipped, even to the veil, and what a weight," exclaimed her father, as he lifted Hattie to carry her to the carriage; "Ally Ruthven and Agnes will laugh to find there is so little left when our Bird sheds her

coats; and how glad Ulie and Etta will be to have you two or three days."

"Am I not to come back with you, papa?"

"I am going further and cannot well stop for you to-day, dear; I think my Bird will be benefitted by remaining with her friends; yet, Birdie, if you would rather not oblige me, darling, you may stay at home."

"No, father; Housie said one day, if we always did as you and mother wished, we would never do wrong, I would rather go, papa; good-bye, sister; good-bye, mamma; good-bye, Aunt Harriet."

"Dear, dear, child; we certainly have an assured hope of great comfort in her; may she long be spared to us," said Mrs. Nesbit, withdrawing from the window when she could no longer catch a glimpse of the carriage.

There was a long interval of silence after Major Nesbit had left the little group in the dining-room; Marion was the first to speak.

"Am I not right in my suspicions, mother, that father has heard something relative to Nellie, to induce him to brave this hail-storm to-day?"

"You are right, dear, he has had news of our wanderer."

"Where is she, mother? And what of dear Nellie? May I not be told?"

"She will return home with your father to-day; Captain Delacroix would have accompanied her to-morrow, but your father prefers bringing her home himself."

"How strange the infatuation that could have induced Nellie to leave our sweet home. Under the most favorable circumstances, I do think it would be a great trial; and father's errand to-day is enough to make my heart shrink from the idea of ever parting from him myself. What would he not sacrifice for us, mother?"

"Peculiar circumstances have made us all keenly alive to our duty to, and our dependence on each other. Had Howard been here, your father had not gone for Cornelia; none other than her father or brother could with propriety."

"Lemuel Mordecai is much concerned he cannot be with us at this time; he writes, that if you or father will give him the least encouragement to do so, he would leave his studies and surmount all difficulties."

"We are satisfied, dear, he would leave nothing undone for us, in his power to accomplish; and it would be cheering to have his sympathy and society in this trying hour, yet it is better for your sister's sake we should be alone on her return to us."

"Was it not for that reason he persuaded Bird away?"

"Yes, to avoid her questions and save Cornelia's feelings."

"How considerate in father."

"That, Marion, is one of the most beautiful traits in your father's character, rarely met with in the human family."

"Astonishingly little consideration, indeed, among the race," observed Miss Houston; "and Cornelia was utterly devoid of it."

"Had Nellie reflected, Aunt Harriet, she would not have involved her family; she was allured by the expectation of a title, and did not dream of treachery." The tears of Marion fell upon her sewing; her voice trembled as she enquired: "Mother, is not Nellie to be forgiven, and received as though she had not erred? she still belongs to us."

"We may not withhold our forgiveness, Marion, and it is not easy to break life's attachments; but your sister has certainly forfeited her claim upon our affection and to a home in the circle of her injured family."

"Radcliff is violently opposed to her return, mother," she faltered.

"Radcliff," interrupted Miss Houston; "condemns more severely than is becoming in a brother, and surely we are all quite as much disgraced."

"No one could have been more acutely sensitive to public reproach than Cornelia herself, the glance of scorn will wither her; oh! how could Nellie bring such

a blight upon herself and upon us all;" faltered Marion, bursting into a convulsive fit of sobbing.

"The shadow of a great cloud is, indeed, resting upon us, daughter," replied Mrs. Nesbit; "but we are taught to look beyond this world for the dissipation of sorrow."

Miss Houston said only: "Come unto me;" and laid her hand, soothingly, on that of Marion. The roll of carriage wheels broke upon the silence, and Mrs Nesbit, rising hastily, exclaimed; "Can it be possible so soon?"

The quick eye of Marion recognized the vehicle; with an exclamation of delight she bounded from the room and into the arms of her grandfather. How good, how kind, how considerate, dear grandpa, to come to us!" she cried.

"Where is your brother? Where is Hogan? to lift your grandmother from the carriage," he enquired, embracing her over and over again; "run away and bring them." Without turning to express her astonishment, Marion disappeared to call Hogan; and herself assisted in carrying old Mrs. Houston over the ice into the house.

"Dear father, dear mother!" said Mrs. Nesbit, when she had so far conquered her emotion to give utterance to words; "at any other time I should feel alarmed, and would chide your risking such a storm, but you will be such a solace."

"I felt we would, my dear, and proposed accompanying your father, as soon as he suggested coming; at this time your most intimate friends would, from delicacy, absent themselves."

The divan was rolled very near the fire for the accommodation of the welcome guests. "Where is Radcliff?" enquired the old lady.

"Call your brother, Marion," said Mrs. Nesbit, "I was willing Radcliff should have been absent on the arrival of Cornelia, he expresses himself almost rancorously respecting her elopement."

Mr. Houston compressed his lip, the old lady sighed, and turning to Miss Harriet, enquired if she had recovered from her headache.

"It is throbbing now from excitement, mother," she

replied softly, "I dread her return, I scarcely know why."

"Poor child," returned the old lady, "if she could have foreseen the head and the heart-aches her conduct would occasion! What a train of evils has resulted from this one silly action! I pray it may eventuate to her spiritual benefit; she has certainly blighted all her worldly prospects."

"And those of her family also," remarked Radcliff, hearing the last words, "and ought to go somewhere into seclusion," he added, with bitterness, "she proposed herself in one of her letters to stay a time with you, grandfather."

"To which neither your father nor myself would listen, Radcliff; quite enough has been said on that subject; this house will be her home."

"I think it flagrant injustice, mother, to subject the whole family to the scorn of the world," he exclaimed, bringing his closed hand heavily down upon the table near him.

There was a simultaneous bend of countenances towards him. Mr. Houston, after a moment's pause, said, "The language of the son tells as sadly for your training, Mary, as the action of the daughter."

"I confess, I have erred father, in that respect; Radcliff and Cornelia have long manifested to my unfortunate want of firmness; had they both been oftener checked in childhood, neither now would have been beyond my control."

Radcliff, pushing his chair and throwing back his coat, endeavored to look defiance; but the calm, earnest eye of his grandfather sent the crimson to his brow, and he sat awkwardly silent, under that continued gaze. Whatever else had been neglected the children of Mrs. Nesbit had been taught to honor their grandparents; this profound respect was now exhibited in the blushing silence of Radcliff.

"With whom is the jurisdiction of this dwelling, young man?" enquired Mr. Houston, still regarding him with the same steadfast eye.

"Excuse me, grandfather," he replied with a powerful effort to recover an indifferent manner. "I do not wish to be misunderstood as having any disposition to usurp the control of my father's house, but with due deference to you, grandfather, and to mother also, I am at a loss to understand how this extreme clemency towards one who has acted contrary to every law of propriety, can comport with your rigid views of morality. Is there not evident inconsistency here sir?"

"Were Radcliff Nesbit," returned the old gentleman, "better acquainted with the precepts of the Gospel, he would have known it was only compatible with Christianity to make every effort to restore the wandering; have you heard one syllable of extenuation? The tearful eyes, and sad countenances around you, testify to the sorrow this misdemeanor of your sister has occasioned, and Radcliff," he continued, more sternly, "you may read from the lips which said 'forgive seventy times seven,' 'Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.' Here let the discussion end, only remember Cornelia is my grandchild as well as yourself."

Radcliffe, without farther reply, walked towards a window, while Mr. Houston, drawing a seat between his wife and daughter, asked the latter the date of Howard's last letter. Miss Houston and Marion having left the room some time before.

The very sudden exit of Radcliff immediately after was explained by the arrival of the little carriage at the door. Before Hogan was aware his services would be required, old Mr. Houston had opened the door and would have proceeded with an umbrella to meet them, but Marion, from an upper window, having noticed the horse as he turned into the lane, was waiting with a woman servant at the gate to receive her father and sister.

Major Nesbit jumped from the carriage, and perceiving Marion, he turned anxiously to her and said, "Run into the house, daughter, under Margaret's umbrella, do not stand a moment longer exposed to the cold; Cornelia's shoes are thin, I must carry her, go my dear."

Marion obeyed, but she stood on the very threshold of the hall door, "My precious sister," she murmured. With her arms caressingly around her she led her into the breakfast-room.

The wan, haggard appearance of Cornelia overcame Mrs. Nesbit, she sank into the nearest seat. Miss Houston, who had also returned to the room, quietly removed the bonnet and cloak of her niece, remarking as she did so, "This is a sad business for us all, Cornelia."

Mr. Houston arranged a chair very near the fire, saying, "you have had a very cold ride my child, some care is needful to prevent evil consequences; your mother will be better presently."

"Yes, I am recovering," Mrs. Nesbit replied, unclasping the arms of Cornelia from her neck, "Your return will act powerfully towards my restoration; these nerves have undergone sufficient to distract me of late; but you are here once more. Leave me, Nellie, and go to the fire, you are shivering now." She leaned over and kissed her grandmother as she passed, but the power of speech seemed denied her—she wept incessantly.

The circle at the fireside was widened soon after to admit the chair of Major Nesbit, who expressed great pleasure on seeing Mr. and Mrs. Houston, so unexpected on so inclement a day.

"Where is Hattie?" whispered Cornelia, to Marion.

"I suppose Bird is at Mr. Ruthven's, father?" Marion answered by inquiring.

"Yes,—reluctantly remaining with Miss Julia; Ulie and his sister were overjoyed to see her. I left them engaged in some new game Harry Ruthven had introduced. Bird will return home with Howard the day after to-morrow."

"Will Howard be with us so soon? Have you letters?" was enquired by several voices.

"Julia has one,—here is one for Marion, and one also for you, mother," he replied, handing them to his daughter and Mrs. Houston.

"The mail seldom brings letters here that I am not

remembered," observed the delighted old lady. "The reverence of that boy for the 'Hoaryhead,' will be visited upon his own." She removed her spectacles to wipe the tear from her eyes, then replaced them to peruse the page from her paragon. Marion was as eagerly acquainting herself with the contents of that addressed to her.

"Every line breathes nobleness of soul, dear child," said the old lady; "so affectionate,—so worthy of himself—" she passed it into the hand of her husband, who had drawn near the table to have the next reading. "Many Howard Nesbits would make a cloudless world."

"Rather furnish borders for dark clouds, grandmother," whispered Marion. "But what life-giving subject has he touched, to draw forth such strong encomiums from his grandmamma?"

"Your grandfather will read it aloud, and yours too, if you have finished it."

"Better not mine," she replied in an undertone; "it relates principally to his errand to Vesinore."

"What is the purport of that leaf, father?" asked Mrs. Nesbit.

Without changing his position, or removing his glasses, Mr. Houston proceeded :

#### "MY BELOVED GRANDMOTHER:

"It does my lone heart good to turn my pen in your direction, and, as it traces the lines, to imagine myself again in that sweet homestead, listening to your counsels, and praises too, grandmother, and to grandfather's retrospection. Oh! I find no fireside to compare with our own. My soul rises in thankfulness, in recalling the past, and in the anticipation of many, many more pleasant hours at that hearth-stone and table. Mine has indeed been a favored lot. I have been most courteously treated by the Consul-General here. At his earnest solicitation, his dwelling has been mine the last few days, but the definition of home is not understood in this mansion; luxury and fashion

rule arbitrarily. I am entertained as a foreign prince might be, with no omission of politeness or hospitable courtesy, but entirely differently from my views of comfort,—not as my mother and you, grandmother, would receive a youth, and he a stranger. Our Consul has no mother,—no grandmother; he has a fashionable wife, governed rigidly by conventional rules. I love etiquette to a degree, but its sway here is burdensome. Oh! for a seat by your side, this minute,—but I did not mean to whisper a murmur, notwithstanding these chained thoughts would burst their fetters, and float off to Grangeville,—but not a word more of home. May I only be grateful that in a few days, I shall fold you all to my heart, and may I ever remember the Great Giver of these precious, precious boons. Tell Bird, I long for her past suppressing;—oh! my little Bird.

“Truly, your own,

HOWARD.”

“Our own Howard, *en verité*,” repeated the old gentleman, as he handed the letter to his wife, and removed his spectacles. “There needs no stronger proof of a young man’s nobleness of character, than deference to the aged. How differently constituted from his brother; he knows no distinction of persons.”

“Trained, not constituted, father,” returned Mrs. Nesbit. “But I hear his step in answer to the dinner-bell; please do not make him the subject of remark just now.”

“Dinner-bell!—where is dinner?” asked Cornelia.

“As we had all congregated here, I bade Hogan lay the table in the parlor,” replied her mother.

Radcliff opened the door, he came in, and observed, carelessly; “There is a porter outside, making enquiries relative to the disposition of some three or four trunks; as they bear the Vesinore post-stamp, I judge they are the property of Mrs. McFadden; he is waiting for orders.” Marion left the room quickly, closing the door after her. The blood mounted to the very temples of Cornelia; her mother replied to her imploring look:

"Your sister will make every necessary arrangement, neither wound you unnecessarily. That name, Radcliff," she added, turning to him, "is not recognized in this family. Your sister, particularly, desires it may not be mentioned in her presence." He bowed his head scornfully; his dinner was eaten in silence; his withdrawal from the table was a relief to Cornelia, for although he had not uttered another syllable, his lip of contempt, and occasional glance of defiance, gave her an unaccountable feeling of uneasiness.

The day wore away; the seat of Radcliff was vacant at the evening meal; he was absent from prayers. Cornelia had been apparently indifferent to every topic of conversation introduced; she had not been particularly addressed, or avoided; if she felt any interest, she exhibited none. After the family had separated for the night, and she was alone with Marion, she gave way to a violent fit of hysterical sobbing. "I am nothing, and nobody," she exclaimed. "I have lost the confidence of you all, Marion, and must endure the insolence of Rad. Oh! if father did not look so severely stern,—if he would only—"

"Your return to us, Nellie," interrupted her sister, bending over and weeping with her, "with a sincere determination to do your duty, will effectually regain all that has been, for the time, lost. Sincerity of purpose, and regret for past errors, will restore you entirely to your family, my dear sister. Surely father said nothing to the contrary, Nellie?"

"Father!—not a word has passed his lips since we left Varastone. Oh! that he would speak, if even to censure."

"This only confirms what I have told you, Nellie; on your own conduct will depend father's future course towards you. I confess I have not heard him mention your name since this sad circumstance occurred, and, I am assured, with his high standard of moral obligation, he must feel deeply wounded and mortified, and will only be conciliated by being fully convinced you are radically changed. This you must expect, dear Nellie.

Father is always uncompromising where duty is concerned. My dear sister, that I had influence to advise and guide you!" Marion's tears flowed freely.

Anxiously raising her eyes, Cornelia enquired: "Has the knowledge of this disagreeable affair extended over Grangeville?"

"I fear so, Nellie; but it is a subject never broached within these walls. From the extreme kindness evinced towards us, we feel we have the sympathy of all our friends, though the circumstance has never been alluded to. Father has excluded himself from society entirely. His boundary line is limited to his office and home."

"Yet surely, Marion, if the proper course is pursued, father will recover his cheerfulness and return to his former habits."

"The proper course is the question, dear Nellie," returned her sister, with a deep sigh. "I know it is not my province to censure, but to soothe; yet you cannot but be sensible, the displeasure of our father is deservedly yours, and it must be yours to make the advance towards removing it. Were I in your place, I would seek an early opportunity to express to him my regret for the past, and obtain his forgiveness; I would not rest until reconciled—why not, now, Nellie? I hear him closing the library door, delay will only increase the difficulty; he doubtless expects it, and most assuredly deserves it of you. Do you not feel it a privilege to be the daughter of our father, Nellie?"

The better feelings were for a moment excited. She arose, but lingered near the door.

"Do not hesitate," said Marion, eagerly; "you will remove a weight from my heart—from his—and assure yourself of father's forgiveness."

"I cannot," she exclaimed, petulently, returning and throwing herself upon a couch. "I have suffered quite sufficiently to atone for my transgressions, and my conduct henceforth will convince father I am perfectly conscious of my error; let things take their natural course. How could I bear that Rad should know that

I am a suppliant for pardon ; no, Marion, self-chastisement I cannot inflict."

The sister answered not a word ; but a sleepless-night, and a pillow wet with tears, testified to the intensity of the disappointment. The effect on her appearance the next morning was not unobserved by her anxious mother, but divining the cause, Marion remained unquestioned. The return of Howard with little Hattie did much to restore her bloom, and cheerfulness to the circle.

When alone with Cornelia, he gave her a detail of the course he had pursued with McFadden.

"The fellow," as he styled him ; "I have satisfactorily bribed him to return no more to this part of the globe ; here," he concluded, "is his affidavit to that effect. I hope, Nellie, you may never have occasion to bring it forward, though should he require more money at some future period, this parchment will effectually silence all demands on whatever plea."

With a trembling hand she took the paper, and said, hesitatingly : "I thank you, Howard ; I have really been a source of trouble and expense to you."

"The trouble and expense would be of little consequence, could I, by either, or both, wipe away the stain from your reputation, my sister."

"Similar events have occurred, and are forgotten," she faltered.

Whatever his thoughts, they did not escape the lips of her brother, and ever after he cautiously avoided the subject.

Major and Mrs. Nesbit witnessed painfully the increasing irritability of Cornelia, and the selfish spirit she still manifested. With her father she had little intercourse. She said "he never addressed her unless to rebuke, and when she attempted to extenuate her fault, he told her her conduct would admit of no palliation, but he was willing to bury the past in oblivion, so soon as he should see convincing proof of her sincere regret, on account of its sinfulness, instead of vain murmuring at the consequences."

"You could hardly require more of father, Nellie," was Marion's answer; "yet I am sure he, and all of us, are ready to do anything in the world to cheer and comfort you. I wish you could make the effort to be less melancholy; your unvarying sadness, I fear, will affect mother seriously."

"I cannot help it, Marion, I never can be otherwise; neglected and forlorn I shall always feel, and Rad is forever on the alert to mortify me; no one noticed his cutting glance while the Mac's of Scotland were being discussed to-day at dinner; and none excepting myself heard his galling question: 'They who wear the title of Mac, are the élite, are they not?' I could, by informing father, get redress, for he has several times silenced him, but I shrink from that resource, and Rad knows it."

Marion looked distressed, and was about to reply, when the door was thrown open, and Hattie ran in.

"Come, sisters," she exclaimed, "come down stairs, come see the lovely picture Dr. Ruthven has brought to mamma—a picture of my Housie—my brother, and I am inside of the frame with him; it is so beautiful. Mamma says come down."

Taking her hand in hers, Marion accompanied the child; Cornelia promised to follow "after a while."

The picture was an exact representation of Houston, as he stood gazing on the gorgeous sun-set; it had been taken in oil by an able artist, from the sketch of Dr. Ruthven. Hattie was introduced into it from a daguerreotype, represented intently admiring with her brother, the western skies.

"It is impossible to express my grateful feelings, Henry," said Mrs. Nesbit, with overflowing eyes. "A mine of gold could not tempt me to relinquish the treasure, and to Hattie it will be of countless value, yet we must place it beyond her reach, she added, clasping the little girl in her arms, "or it will vanish away with her kisses."

"That may, but this copy," replied Howard, drawing his sister from her mother towards himself, "is to be

kissed as often as she is inclined, and to be worn round her neck; she cannot injure it."

To the astonished and delighted child, he produced the medallion of Miss Julia's purse, containing the hair of the two children; on the contra side was enclosed a copy of the picture taken by daguerreotype, for her expressly, her brother told her.

Hattie's eyes were rivetted on it several minutes, then throwing her arms around the neck of Howard in a tight clasp, she wept impetuously.

"Hattie—Bird," he whispered, "shall I take it away? Does it grieve you to see Housie?"

She raised and shook her head, but for a length of time she was very quiet, even after her brother had succeeded in calming her. Ever after, that medallion was her constant companion, and inexpressibly dear to her.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

"She that asks her dear five hundred friends,  
Contemns them all, and hates their coming."

"SINCE your return, my son, we have not seen Julia," remarked Mrs. Nesbit. "I am hurt and disappointed; as she assured me she would do all in her power to make Nellie feel comfortable and happy."

Howard smiled. "She had some intimation from Emilie that her future residence is undergoing repairs; and delicacy prevents her venturing too near the premises. She told me that she would have written to Nellie, but scarcely felt intimate enough to do so."

"Mrs. Jameston has seen her several times, and her kind, affectionate manner has won the heart of Nellie. Poor, deluded child. She is indeed bowed to the earth."

"The consciousness that a visit will be gratifying to you, mother, will be sufficient to overcome all her scrupu-

ples. I will bring her home with me this afternoon. Her mother and she intend spending a few days with Mrs. Jameston."

Springing into his sleigh, he called back pleasantly, as he waved his hand good-bye; "At four o'clock, I will return, freighted with a rich cargo, mother."

"There comes brother," exclaimed Hattie, who was standing at Cornelia's window. "Here he comes, up the lawn, driving dear Miss Julia. I will run and get the very first kiss." So saying, she glided down, and met them as they entered the hall door. After returning warmly a most welcome reception, Miss Ruthven was led by her little escort into the library, where Mrs. Nesbit and Marion were sitting, sewing; while Howard drove his sleigh to the stable, to give it into Hogan's charge.

"We have missed you sadly, Julia," said Mrs. Nesbit, kissing her affectionately; "Marion has been perfectly lost, and Nellie felt somewhat hurt."

"A double responsibility has kept me much confined of late, my dear Mrs. Nesbit; but to-day, I had the first intimation that Nellie wished to see me. I have desired much to be with you all."

"But a lion was in the way, in the guise of an unfurnished house," said Howard, as he entered the room, unperceived.

Miss Ruthven, blushing deeply, enquired, "Where is Nellie, mother? I—I mean Mrs. Nesbit.

"Only a little in anticipation," said Howard, laughing heartily, "but I warn you, Mademoiselle Ruthven, in going to Nellie's room, not to take even a peep from the landing window, or the apparition will appear full in view, and just as bare of furniture as you require."

"Your warning is quite gratuitous, Master Howard," she replied, joining nervously in the laugh directed against her by the whole party; "I shall not gratify you by even one glance. Shall I follow you to Nellie's room, Marion?"

"Nellie wished to see you alone, my dear," said Mrs. Nesbit. "It will be less embarrassing for both of you."

There was a very arch look from Howard, as he whispered something in her ear. An "if you dare," arrested him, and with a deep sigh, he exclaimed, "A sad foretaste, truly. Tyrannical sway, already."

Miss Ruthven, raising her finger in token of defiance, ran up stairs to Nellie.

"What was hidden under that remark, respecting want of furniture?" enquired Marion, "Does she not know, that Emilie and I, have been occupied the last ten days in her service?"

"She does not; but she is quite troubled now, on a point of etiquette. She intended furnishing with the remnant of their property, which is not for a moment, to be even under consideration. Five thousand dollars is all that remains, that must be settled upon Mrs. Ruthven, that she may have no sense of obligation. She, very unwillingly relinquishes the idea, and as she feels some pride upon the subject, she proposes remaining a few weeks with her mother, and furnishing after our marriage."

"She is willing to depend entirely upon you, afterwards," remarked Mrs. Nesbit, "Why not now permit some obligation?"

"Custom is arbitrary, mother; her friends, all go through this important ceremony with their own funds."

"But Mrs. Jameston did not."

"No, Mr. Jameston knew there would be difficulty, and did not consult until the whole matter was settled."

"What course do you intend pursuing, brother?"

"Have matters proceed, without her knowledge, my little sister; with you and Emily to assist me, it will readily be accomplished. I have already gone too far to retract."

"It will be a surprise I shall take much interest in forwarding," said Marion. "We could not have you so long in Varastone."

"My desire is to be near home; at this time, Nellie needs me here. I doubt, she would even ride in the afternoons, if I did not accompany her; but there is the

dinner bell, I will go up and see whether the young ladies are ready."

"They will not need you as an escort," said Marion, "I hear their voices upon the stair-case."

They soon appeared, the arm of each clasped around the waist of the other. Both, had evidently been weeping; but the subdued expression of Cornelia's countenance, showed the conversation had been of a soothing nature. They walked slowly, Miss Ruthven, still talking earnestly, not perceiving the little group below.

"If Jesus be our strong-hold, dear Nellie," she said, "we need fear little the efforts of man against us."

"But contempt, Julia, and neglect; it is to me a deadly potion; and to feel you deserve it, increases the agony ten-fold."

They ceased speaking, seeing Howard awaiting them at the foot of the stairs, and each, taking a proffered arm, went silently into the dining-room. A smile, lighted the usually sad face of Major Nesbit, as Miss Ruthven entered.

"You are as welcome as the rays of the sun, succeeding a cloudy day, Julia," he said, advancing to meet her, and pressing her hand warmly "My little daughter is a stranger of late."

"But I hope, Major Nesbit, to keep at least a portion of my birth day here; to-morrow, I will be just twenty-three."

"A mature age, truly my child," he replied, kissing her cheek affectionately, "May there be many happy repetitions of the same event."

"I will add an amen to that wish, father," said Howard, as he led her to a seat beside his sister.

"I would rather pray, Major Nesbit," returned Miss Ruthven, gravely, "that a useful, rather than long life might be granted."

"My wish comprehended both, my dear. When the life is devoted to the Redeemer's service, it cannot fail being useful."

"The spirit is willing, but the flesh very weak, Major Nesbit."

"Christ, will do the work, daughter, lean upon him, place all your confidence there, and go forth to fight the fight of faith, knowing, that henceforth, there is laid up for you a crown of glory that will never fade away. Let Jesus be your constant theme; endeavor to turn many to righteousness, and hereafter, you will shine as the stars in the firmament of heaven."

The earnest, impressive manner of Major Nesbit, sank deeply into the hearts of most present.

Miss Ruthven, with much emotion, replied, "I will endeavor to be a burning and shining light in Zion. I need the prayers of God's people to shield me from temptation."

"Many prayers will ascend for you, Julia, and you will shortly have an earthly guide, who, I trust, will seek to lead you aright, but the temptation in his path is the fear; he with difficulty will see blemishes in that chosen one."

Julia blushed, as her eye met that of Howard, fixed intently upon her. "I shall note all her faults, father," he replied, smiling, "so that I may recognize her as more suited to be my companion."

"I fear not for either of you, my children, the Lord will make your path of duty clear."

The cloth was removed, ere another word was spoken, and the family withdrew to the parlor.

"Hogan will be here in a few moments," said Howard, looking at his watch, "As my sleigh is rather small for the accommodation of so many young ladies, I directed Hogan to get one from the Queen. I want to show you the Varro in all its glory. The trees on its borders, glistening with icicles, as though they were encircled with crystals, and the bosom of the lake covered with merry skaters. It is one of the most cheering scenes I have ever witnessed. Come, Bird, get hat and tippet, dear,—we can easily make room for our little sister."

Hattie shook her head, and seated herself on a little stool beside her mother.

"Not go, Bird?" enquired her brother.

"I would rather not."

"But why, Birdie?"

"I don't want to see the Varro," she replied, mournfully, "or John, or Charlie, or Willie, skating either. Please don't ask me to go, brother; I would rather stay at home with mamma and papa, and let you and sisters and Miss Julia go without me."

"But you will go home with me to-morrow, Hattie?" said Miss Ruthven, "Lemuel and Etta, are both coming on purpose to play with you."

Hattie looked concerned for a moment, then whispered, "Will you go, mamma?"

"Yes, daughter, we are all going to Mrs. Jameston's. It is Miss Julia's birthday, and Lemuel's mother and father are to be there too."

"Shall I come home with you, mamma?" she enquired looking anxiously up into her face, "I can't stay, now Housie's gone." she whispered.

The sleigh driving up, Howard, after tenderly kissing his little sister, assisted the ladies into it, and giving the horses the rein, they were soon out of sight, and within half an hour, were riding on the borders of the Varro. The scene was truly exhilarating. The lake appeared as a sea of glass, the skaters, in gay and beautiful costumes, with jackets of every fanciful hue, were dashing along, vieing with each other in the grace and velocity of their motions. Many a cap was doffed, and many a smile returned as the sleigh appeared in view, for Howard and Marion were known to most of the villagers of Grangeville. The veil of Cornelia prevented any possible recognition, and even she became an amused spectator. The rein was hanging loosely upon the arm of Howard, as they drove slowly along, his attention being entirely bent upon the skaters. Suddenly there was a loud shout from a hundred voices —some great feat had been attempted, and in the effort, the unlucky wight had fallen headlong, to the great

amusement of his fellow skaters. The air resounded with cheers. A silvery female voice joining in the general laugh, caught the ear of Cornelia. The tones were so familiar that it led her thoughts to former days, but where to place it, she could not determine. The next moment, a sleigh drawn by a splendid pair of bay horses, flew past them. The gentleman sitting beside the driver could not be mistaken. Cornelia instinctively drew her veil more closely, as she recognized Mr. Lennox. He was conversing with much animation to the ladies with him, and did not notice her.

"There is Mrs. Wilton," remarked Miss Ruthven, "the sister of Mr. Lennox. She is a charming woman."

"I was not aware," replied Marion, "he had a sister with him."

"Yes, a widowed sister. I saw her a few days since, at Mr. Jameston's. Mr. and Mrs. Spencer were passing the day with them, and they drove over in the afternoon to see sister."

Mr. and Mrs. Spencer, guests of Mr. Lennox! How it thrilled Cornelia!

"His new house has a very imposing appearance," observed Howard, "I almost wonder, with his unostentatious views, he would have erected such a building."

"I heard sister say the furniture was exceedingly simple, the owner entirely unpretending, and the hand of welcome always extended to the stranger. Four nieces of Mr. Wilton are now with them, prosecuting their studies at Mr. Lennox' expense, with Miss Grafton."

Perceiving the face of Cornelia much flushed, Marion gradually led the conversation into another channel, and after an hour's ride along the borders of the lake, they returned home.

Declining tea, Cornelia threw herself upon the couch in the library. The image of Mr. Lennox was impressed so vividly upon her mind, she could not erase it. The knowledge of his present position overwhelmed her. The intimate friend of the élite of Varastone. For a long time she lay, her head buried

in the cushions. Unable to endure her reflections, she arose, and tossing herself into a chair, she murmured : " My day-star of hope is extinguished ; no ray of light penetrates my cloudy destiny ; the blackness of darkness is around about me."

" Say not so, dear Nellie," said Miss Ruthven, who entered at that moment. " Let the Star of Bethlehem guide you ; and the Sun of Righteousness will arise and dispel all clouds, however dense, and fringe them with a golden border."

Cornelia started.

" I was not aware any one was in hearing," she replied, petulantly. " But your counsel will not avail me, Julia ; my vision is bounded by things temporal ; presenting the glories of a future state, you strike no chord of sympathy."

" Pardon me, Nellie, this seeming intrusion, but my anxiety to see you happy, tempted me to offer you the only balm fitted to soothe the wounded spirit."

" Let us dismiss the subject, if you please," said Cornelia, haughtily, " and speak on topics more congenial to my nature."

Miss Ruthven sighed.

" I would only quote those beautiful lines," she remarked, "'Tis not the whole of life to live, nor all of death, to die."

" The remembrance of death only deepens the shadows of life," she replied, " and renders it, if possible, more dreary."

Miss Ruthven was about replying, when the entrance of the other members of the family, interrupted them. The ladies seated themselves at the table with their sewing, while Howard and Major Nesbit played a game at chess.

" I am delighted that Mr. and Mrs. Houston have accepted sister's invitation for to-morrow," remarked Miss Ruthven, " I anticipate a charming evening. You will join us Nellie, will you not ?"

" If there are no strangers, I should be happy to do so."

"Not one. Mr. and Mrs. Spencer, you know, we consider members of our family. They will accompany brother and Kate."

Cornelia looked chagrined, and almost immediately pleading headache, withdrew to her own apartment.

At an early hour on the following day a very pleasant group was congregated in the drawing-room of Mr. Jameston. Mr. and Mrs. Houston had made unusual effort to gratify Miss Ruthven on this occasion. During Howard's absence, which of course they felt deeply, her attention was unbounded. When in the village, their taste was constantly gratified with a bouquet from the green-house of Mr. Jameston, and one day, at least, in each week was passed with them. Often she might be seen sitting on a low stool at their feet, listening to some pleasant incident or reading to them, while Mrs. Houston plied her needle for some charitable purpose. The bright smile with which she was always received attested to a sincere welcome. "Her visit," said Mr. Houston, in a letter to his grandson, "are as cordial to our souls, filling the aching void which the separation from our poor deluded one has caused. She is our chosen one also, and ranks in our esteem only second to Marion. *She* you know is our first born."

To the surprise and gratification of all parties Mr. Mordecai was announced.

"Though an uninvited guest, Mrs. Jameston," he remarked, "the temptation was too powerful to resist, when Hogan told me of the gathering here."

"Your letter, Lemuel," said Mrs. Ryers, "gave us little hope of your return until Wednesday morning."

"But a sly hint from another source," he replied, looking archly at Miss Ruthven, "told me that my services would be required in so short a period, that I laid aside my books, and here I am to await the commands of all or any of the party present."

"I am rejoiced, Mordecai," said Howard, "that you responded to my call so promptly, particularly as I am certain there is no self-denial practiced."

"But I must accuse you, Mr. Mordecai," said Mrs.

Jameston, "of some little feigned humility in proffering an apology, when you are fully aware of the pleasure this unexpected visit affords us. You are just in time to join us at the tea table."

"Santa Claus has surely mistaken the season of the year," said Mr. Jameston, as they returned into the drawing-room, pointing to sundry packages lying upon the table. "I think, Emilie, this must be a giving visit. Old Santa has taken me for a country minister. What is your opinion of the case, Miss Julia Ruthven?"

"You, as a recipient, would assume quite a new position, brother," she replied. "At all seasons Santa most opportunely supplies your friends in need."

"Providence has richly furnished my store, Julia; I only give from my abundance."

"And take so much pleasure in relieving the wants of others," said Mrs. Spencer, "that I am not certain but your reward is with you."

"The Lord loveth a cheerful giver," rejoined Mr. Houston.

"Cheerful!" repeated Mrs. Jameston, "I verily believe he esteems himself the debtor."

"You forget," said Mr. Jameston, "that while lack of self-denial is being discussed, there is no light thrown on the contents of these packages. Permit me first to read the direction of this box before I bring forth its tenants. 'For Julia on her birth-day.' What a disappointment!"

"For me?" exclaimed Miss Ruthven.

"Even so, my little sister," he replied, displaying a superb tea service of silver. "From Mrs. Spencer," a card stated.

Miss Ruthven stood lost in admiration and wonder.

A dinner and tea set of French china from sister Kate was then opened and laid upon the table. Many other precious little gifts there were, with the names attached of intended friends and relatives who desired to manifest their regard.

"Really, Julia," said Mr. Jameston, with a very arch look, "with all these foreign accessions a long sojourn

in Varastone will scarce be needed. I am sorry I am too poor to add my mite on this occasion."

"Those beautiful mirrors, said Marion, lately placed in a certain cottage not very distant from Major Nesbit, cast rather a reflection on your words."

"Did you, indeed, brother?" enquired Miss Ruthven, her eyes filling with tears. "How can I return such manifestations of regard, and Mrs. Spencer I certainly did not expect"—

"The pleasure it afforded us, Julia," interrupted Mrs. Spencer, "far exceeds any obligation you may feel."

"My thanks are due to all present, none but have kindly remembered me."

"This mat is the only article you have not noticed, Julia," said Howard. "It was made purposely for you by Hogan, with an humble request that you would not be offended at the liberty."

"I shall treasure it for his sake," she replied.

"I move it be labeled," said Mr. Jameston, "A keepsake." We should then all tread lightly on entering. Your offering has not yet been produced, Master Nesbit;" then turning to Miss Ruthven, "Why, Julia, you have been furnishing yourself with a remarkably beautiful watch, if it do the chain and seal justice. Miss Ruthven, the time if you please."

"The color mounted to the cheek of Miss Ruthven, but the time was not mentioned, neither were the hours noticed until the village bell, sounding ten, brought a reminder that the evening had flown."

"I wanted to say, Julia," said Mrs. Spencer, "that, as we were confident you would not wish a display of any gifts, we thought it would be more convenient to have them placed in some private closet here to await their future destination."

"You are right, Mrs. Spencer, a gift from those we love is truly gratifying, but exhibitions to me manifest so great a want of refinement that I always feel uncomfortably at witnessing them."

"An exhibition of what nature?" enquired Mr. Houston.

"Of presents, grandpapa," replied Marion, "and the names of the donors placed upon each gift."

"And this for the gaze of the multitude?" enquired the old gentleman, in perfect amazement. "You may very justly apply the term unrefined; nay, it is vulgar."

"I will give you my hand upon that sentiment, Mr. Houston," said Mr. Spencer. "Why so strange a custom should ever have been tolerated in refined life, I cannot imagine."

"Kate here," said Mrs. Spencer, laughing, "kept the key in her pocket, so fearful was she of the guests getting a single peep. But we forget we are infringing on the hours of Mr. Houston."

Mr. Jameston drew a small table towards him, with the family Bible upon it.

"You will lead us in worship, Mr. Houston, before we separate."

"Lemuel will read a few verses," he replied; "my eyes are now becoming rather dim."

A portion of the 45th chapter of Isaiah was chosen by Mr. Mordecai, there was a few words of comment by Mr. Houston, on the Saviour's dying love, and a fervent supplication offered for a blessing on all present, and the party separated for the night. Mr. Mordecai, proposing to make some visits on the following morning with Marion among her poor, returned home with Mr. and Mrs. Ryers.

"This has been indeed a bright and happy evening," remarked Major Nesbit, as he entered with his wife and daughter into the library.

Cornelia was sitting, one elbow upon the table, her eyes cast down gloomily.

"Well daughter," enquired Mrs. Nesbit, "how have you entertained yourself during our absence?"

"Entertained!" she repeated, without the slightest change of position; "just about as pleasant as Marion might have imagined when she left me to my solitary musings."

"Had I known, Nellie, you desired me to remain

with you, I would certainly have done so," replied her sister, seating herself beside her, and offering to take her hand.

It was immediately withdrawn, with a sullen, "No apology will suffice, Marion. You know my antipathy to solitude."

Her sister brushed away a tear, but did not reply.

"Had Marion made such a proposition, Cornelia," said Major Nesbit, "I should have interfered. She is too unselfish; would that you had a portion of her spirit. Your selfishness should be corrected, daughter. The impression of your reception I can compare only to entering a damp, dark dungeon, from a light, cheerful hearthstone, where gladness reigns. Full well you know the pressure of sorrow that has nearly crushed us the last few months. This evening, we were permitted to rejoice with the rejoicing, and felt for the moment, bright and happy. You have dispelled it altogether, and we retire, with sad hearts, feeling conscious that we have an ungrateful daughter."

"No complaint of mine was ever heeded, papa," she replied, with the air of a martyr, at the same time rising, and lighting a small lamp standing near her, "I never obtain sympathy, therefore, shall never again sue for it."

"I have said all that is necessary," replied her father. "Marion, touch the bell for the servants. Cornelia, resume your seat."

Slowly and reluctantly she obeyed. The domestics entered. A few moments previous, the heart of Major Nesbit would have been attuned to praise and thanksgiving; now his sad desponding tones, might have touched the heart of Cornelia. If any compunction were felt, it was not evinced, as, on rising from her knees, with a low "good night," she withdrew to her own apartment.

"It is my wish, Marion, that you do not tap at Nellie's door on passing."

"Not tap, papa? She will expect it. It will make her unhappy if I omit it."

"It is nevertheless, my direction, darling," he replied, kissing her good night.

It was with a heavy heart the door of Cornelia was passed, and Marion entered her own chamber.

The sun shone brilliantly over the hills of Grangeville on the following morning, as Mr. Mordecai alighted from the cars, and wended his way to Major Nesbit's.

"You will require furs and muffling, Marion," he remarked, "to exclude the bleak northwesters."

"With my lined boots and warm tippet," she replied, "I defy Mr. Boreas to do his worst."

Many a cottage was visited on that morning, and the heavy heart of many a poor sufferer, was relieved of a portion of its burden, by the soothing word, the gentle sympathy, the fervent prayer offered in their behalf, and pecuniary aid administered where temporal wants were pressing.

"Was not the hand of charity too widely opened for your resources, Lemuel?" Marion enquired, on their return.

Mr. Mordecai smiled. "I find it a good investment, Marion. 'He that giveth to the poor, lendeth to the Lord,' is plainly written."

"Yes. But from your very limited income."

"And do you give only from your abundance?"

"I have been trained from childhood in the school of economy. You, how widely different, nurtured in the lap of luxury from infancy."

"But system will overcome many difficulties, as you well know, Marion."

They had now reached the cottage of Howard. Mrs. Jameston was standing at the window. "Come in, Marion," she called, "and see the effect of the new curtains. Harry says they whisper of the earth, earthy. Please, Mr. Mordecai, your opinion of them also."

"Your pleasant warmth will at least impart the idea of comfort, Mrs. Jameston," said Mr. Mordecai, throw-

ing aside his cloak, as he advanced towards a large hickory fire.

"A dissenting word, at your peril," said Mrs. Dr. Ruthven, springing into the room from her hiding place, "I am sure a Friendly preacher could not object to the color; plain fawn."

"But are the crimson cord and tassels, so grave also, Katie?" enquired Marion; "although I confess they are very tasteful, both in their selection and arrangement."

"Brussels carpets and hair-cloth, certainly looks slightly outrè, without something to relieve their gravity."

"What view will Julia take of the matter, do you suppose?"

"Straight enough, doubtless; too fine for Dorcas societies," &c.

"If meat make my brother to offend, Mrs. Ruthven," said Mordecai, with a sad, though pleasant smile.

"But custom is so arbitrary, Mr. Mordecai; a certain position needs a certain style of living."

"Comparatively, doubtless, Kate," said Marion. "On that point, you and I cannot argue. Mere comforts, in your estimation, would be luxury in mine. This fine hall, with its broad stairway, and rich carpeting, and the spacious parlor on either side, although comprising the whole main body of the house, is as handsome as I should ever desire, even though in the absence of curtains."

"Let the curtains pass," said Mr. Mordecai, smiling, "They certainly reflect credit on the taste of Mrs. Ruthven."

"Our gentle maidens, next door," said Mrs. Ruthven, "certainly bear the palm in both taste and regularity."

"Margaret and Jane, three weeks since," observed Marion, "requested to have the arrangement of matters relating to the culinary department, and they have certainly done themselves credit."

"By to-morrow evening," said Mrs. Jameston, "the house will be ready for the reception of our guests,

mamma's rooms excepted. Those over the dining-room and kitchen are reserved for her, and she is desirous they should be fitted with her old family relics, as she is anxious to preserve them. Mary will continue as her waiting-woman, and fat, old black Susie, will be retained by Julia as cook."

"I must be in Varastone by two," said Mr. Mordecai, glancing at his watch. "Shall I leave you with the ladies, Marion?"

"You will escort us all to Major Nesbit's," she replied, playfully, "as business is by no means pressing, until the furniture arrive. For that we must wait patiently the will of the cabinet-maker."

The ladies, pleased to while away a tedious hour, gave some hasty directions, and throwing on their fur cloaks, accompanied Mr. Mordecai and Marion. Radcliff stood with his mother at the library window, as they came up the lawn.

"'Tis passing strange," he remarked, "that Howard and Jameston should have chosen ladies with so little to recommend them. Our family seems fated to make alliances that will depress, rather than elevate its position. As to Marion, it must be infatuation; a man without any means, and a most uncertain profession. Would that I had never introduced him."

"There is a providence in all things, Radcliff," replied Mrs. Nesbit, "and in the opinion of your father and myself, in those you so much regret, we see a most kindly hand."

"Why, mother, you, living in so much seclusion, do not realize the influence of Howard. It would be felt, did he exert it. A lady, one of the wealthy élite of Varastone, a fine mansion in the city, in place of a poor little petty cottage in this miserable village, with some adroit electioneering, would soon place him in the highest seat, as Chief Magistrate of these United States. What a—" Leaving the sentence unfinished, he paced the floor hurriedly. "You speak of a kind Providence ruling over us, do you include me in the number, mother? With Howard's opportunities, I would have de-

fied—not Providence—but the world, that has proved so faithless to me, while Howard is casting aside its smiles and favors."

"The world, or ambition, has but little power to fetter the mind of your brother, Radcliff; he has far higher aims than even mounting to the pinnacle of fame. Have you seen this miserable petty cottage since its improvements?"

"No, mother. Nor do I intend entering it until compelled, as groomsman, to dine there, on Thursday. I have no wish to encounter that bane of my life, Harry Ruthven."

"Radcliff Nesbit!" exclaimed his mother, "are you deranged? or has an evil spirit taken possession of my son?"

"I know not, my destiny is shrouded in gloom," he replied, hastily retreating, as he heard approaching footsteps.

"Where is Mr. Mordecai?" enquired Mrs. Nesbit, after a kindly greeting had been given. "Howard has gone to the cottage, hoping to find him there."

"And he is on his way to Varastone," replied Mrs. Ruthven, "to pay a visit to Howard's office."

"It is closed. The court has adjourned in consequence of the death of Judge Barnes, and Howard's case is of course postponed until next week. This will compel him to delay his wedding trip also."

"I have convinced Julia," said Mrs. Jameston, "that it will be far more convenient to remain with us while furnishing her house."

"That will enable us to render the surprise complete," said Mrs. Ruthven. "The wedding party can escort her, professedly, to your house, Emily, and she can have a family dinner in her own mansion. I can imagine her amazement, It is too, too good; I am rejoiced the court has adjourned. Good-bye, Mrs. Nesbit, good-bye Emilie. I must go at once, and impart our new plans to Mother Ruthven. You know she is accessory to the whole imposture."

"No sooner devised than carried into effect," observed

her friend, laughing. "Let us take the voice of the remainder of the conspirators, Kate."

"I think it an excellent arrangement," said Mrs. Nesbit, "and there will be no difficulty in accomplishing it. Hogan has succeeded in obtaining a good waiter, and he is a host in himself."

"Then you may venture to entrust Mrs. Ruthven with your new secret, Kate," said Marion; "but here comes Howard, with his little horse, looking quite jaded, as though he sympathised in his master's disappointment."

"Good morning, Mr. Nesbit," said Mrs. Jameston, as he was about alighting; "will you please take compassion on Mrs. Ruthven, and drive her at once to Mr. Jameston's, as she has a secret communication to make to Mrs. Ruthven, senior."

"With pleasure; with a proviso, that I, as a party interested, may be advised of the matter."

"An agreement, as fully as though it were signed, sealed, and delivered," she replied, accepting the offered hand of Howard, and springing into the sleigh. Mr. Nesbit drew a large Afghan around her, and jumping in they were soon out of sight.

Refreshing themselves with a lunch, Mrs. Jameston and Marion returned to the house, to await the arrival of the furniture.

The carriage of Mr. Spencer, at an early hour on Thursday morning, at the door of the cottage of Howard Nesbit, and the interest manifested in arranging a variety of bouquets in the most tasteful manner, showed that some unwonted event was about taking place. The hall also, was filled with the fragrance of lemon and orange trees, and with various kinds of geraniums. Large logs of hickory wood were placed in either parlor, prepared for lighting; the furnace in the hall shedding a delightful warmth throughout the house. The beaming sun threw its rays through the widely opened shutters, into every corner.

"How bright all nature appears this morning!" remarked Mrs. Ruthven.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Jameston, "if it had voice to utter, it would surely say, 'gladness reigns.' May our hearts be attuned to praise the Author, not only as our Creator, but adore him also as our precious Redeemer."

As she spoke, the eye of Mrs. Ruthven was fixed upon her; then, in a low, tremulous tone, she replied; "I have long desired, Emilie, to lay my all at the foot of the cross, but a feeling of shame has prevented my confessing it."

"Shame, Kate? ashamed of Jesus?"

"I cannot tell; it was an undefined feeling; one, altogether sinful that I resolved to conquer, and when I mentioned my changed views to Harry this morning, what was my surprise and gratification to find that he had longed to speak to me on the same subject, and that his mind had been greatly exercised on that which was nearest my heart."

"My darling brother," ejaculated Mrs. Jameston, as a tear glistened in her eye, "and you, my dearest sister," she continued, kissing her affectionately, will, I trust, prove to him a helpmeet, in every sense. My fervent prayer will be that your household may be a household of faith. Do not be satisfied with merely making a profession, but let the light shine, and let it gladden the heart of many a poor pilgrim by turning him from darkness into the marvellous light of the gospel." They wept together.

The secret spring in the heart of Mrs. Ruthven was touched, and her whole confidence was given to her sister. In the most simple manner, she related her story. Her brother's death, and the few words that escaped her father, as he hung in agony over his body. "All flesh is grass; as the flower of the field he perishes." "I resolved to go to my bible, to learn its truths; to follow its precepts; to prepare for death; that horrid thing I could not escape. I desired happiness without holiness; now I desire to find happiness only in doing His will, and to say from the heart: 'Do with me as thou wilt, only, cast me not from Thee, smile upon me through a crucified Redeemer.'"

"I have not a doubt, dear Kate," said Mrs. James-ton, as they stepped into the carriage on their return home, that ere the blessed news was known on earth, angels tuned their harps in praise over one, yea, I trust two repentant sinners."

There was little interchange, of thought that morn-ing, around the breakfast table of Major Nesbit. The bright happy countenance, and kindling eye of Howard, contrasting with the dark frown of Radcliff, showed there was little feeling in unison; and the deep gloom of Cornelia threw a mournful restraint upon the family circle. The eye of Mrs. Nesbit, often turned anxiously towards her daughter, as she perceived her toast almost untasted before her.

"Are you unwell, Nellie?" she enquired.

"Not at all, mother; of my physical health, I have nothing to complain."

"I would advise dark and melancholy countenances to be reserved for a more fitting occasion," observed Major Nesbit, biting his lip with vexation; "had I foreseen a gloom cast over us, by the presence of your brother and yourself, I certainly should have advised you remaining from us."

Radcliff immediately arose, "I will meet you at one o'clock, at Mrs. Ruthven's, Howard," he remarked, "and will endeavor to play the part of a hypocrite admirably. I was not aware it was so necessary at home to do so. I will, of course, relieve you of my presence." There was no reply, and taking his hat, he went im-mediately out.

"Rad is in a sorry mood, this morning," remarked Howard, laughing. "I fear I could not strike a sympathizing chord to-day." There was a bright smile met the eye of Howard, as he raised it to that of his fa-ther.

"This eventful day ought to be ushered in with smiles," he observed, "and no cloud of discontent shall mar our happiness which I have the power of dissipat-ing."

A deep sigh escaped Cornelia.

"I want your taste in some arrangements, Nellie," said Marion, rising, desirous of shielding her from further remarks.

Her sister slowly followed and they proceeded upstairs together.

"Nellie positively declines going to Mrs. Ruthven's on Thursday, Howard," remarked Mrs. Nesbit.

"Does she understand that it will be entirely private, on account of the recent death of our dear boy?" enquired Major Nesbit.

"She is fully aware that Annette Reed is the only stranger. What her reasons are I cannot divine," replied Mrs. Nesbit. "I have noticed since her return, her extreme reluctance to meet the Spencer family. 'Has she any reason for avoiding them, Howard, unknown to us?'"

Howard colored. "It is not surprising mother," he replied, evading the question, "that a mortified spirit would seek seclusion."

"That is an evasive reply, my son," remarked Major Nesbit, "her parents certainly are worthy of confidence."

"I have never been made a confidant of either party, father; circumstances only raised doubts and difficulties in my mind which it is far better should be buried in oblivion."

"Would any reflection be cast upon the Spencer family?"

"Upon none of the living members, and it is well to tread lightly on the ashes of the departed. Please permit me, dear father, to decline further reply. Shall we walk to grandfather's together? I promised to tell him at what hour we will call for them."

"Not now, my son, I must see Dr. Irving and invite him to ride with us. We must start for Varastone by twelve, as one, is the eventful hour," he added smiling. "Mr. and Mrs. Ryers, Lemuel, and the children will call for us. You can remain with grandfather some time. He told me he longed for an hour's quiet chat with you."

"It is now ten," said Howard, taking his hat, and going with alacrity towards the front door; I shall have only one hour to spend with him, as my outward man must undergo some renovation to fit me for a groom," he added, laughing, and waving his hand pleasantly as he disappeared.

At one o'clock the wedding guests were assembled in the drawing-room of Mrs. Ruthven. Radcliff Nesbitt was of the number, not the morose dejected being of the morning, but bright and affable, and conversing with ease and fluency, to those around him.

The ceremony was performed by Dr. Vincent, the pastor of Miss Ruthven, and the blessing given by Dr. Irving. After partaking of some simple refreshment, the whole party entered the carriages awaiting them, and proceeded, as Mrs. Ruthven supposed, to the house of Mr. Jameston.

"What is the meaning of this?" enquired Mrs. Nesbit, as the carriage stopped before the door of the cottage, and Hogan in his best suit, and with a most smiling face opened the gate of the lawn to admit them.

"Tempted by those beautiful bouquets in the windows," replied Howard, smiling, "we desired to enjoy their fragrance."

Mrs. Nesbit looked puzzled. The step was thrown down by Abraham, whom she recognized as belonging to Mrs. Ryers, and Howard springing out, welcomed his guests to his new home. Astonishment held Mrs. Nesbit perfectly silent as she viewed the beautiful apartments.

"We want your opinion, Julia," said her sister, "before we confess being accessory to the plot. You will at least credit me for my unselfishness, as I lose the pleasure of your society."

"I can see the interest of so many dear friends," she replied, her eyes filling with tears, "that I am almost overcome. I feel that my reluctance to permit Mr. Nesbit to furnish was not only great weakness, but sinful pride. I am undeserving all this kindness."

"Then, as a true penitent, we extend our sceptre,"

said Mrs. Dr. Ruthven, affectionately kissing her. "Please give your opinion now of the taste of your humble servants?"

"My admiration is equal to my surprise, dear Kate; I could not have imagined the house so beautiful."

"Particularly the curtains?" enquired Mrs. Ruthven.

"They are exquisite, and the bouquets, I judge, are arranged by the same hand."

"Well, well," replied Mrs. Jameston, "you must now play mine hostess, with all the grace imaginable, as the wedding party, twenty in number, will do themselves the pleasure of dining with you. To save you unnecessary trouble, we have named the hour of four for dinner."

"I am charmed, sister, with all your arrangements, but fear my ability to transform myself into my lady hostess so suddenly. I will postpone being the dignified matron to some future time."

The day wore away pleasantly; the house and furniture were duly examined and admired. All was life and animation. The conversation of Radcliff, gay without volatility, lent a charm to the pleasures of the day, long remembered by those present.

"I have always considered Radcliff Nesbit a charming companion," remarked Dr. Ruthven, on their return home, "but this day he has surpassed himself. He is a brilliant young man, truly."

"Yes; the hours have flown without a shade," remarked Mr. Spencer; "I trust it may be emblematic of the future destiny of those so dear to us, whom Providence has linked in the closest bonds."

## CHAPTER XIX.

“To hold the multitude as one,  
Breathing in measured cadence,  
And all, in sympathy with thee,  
Tremble with tumultuous emotion,  
Verily, Oh ! man, with truth for thy theme,  
Eloquence shall throne thee with archangels.”

MONTHS rolled by ; new scenes were constantly recurring in the large and populous city of Varastone. Something more than usual was transpiring on the day of which we speak. All was hurry and bustle in the crowded streets. The court-house seemed the centre point of attraction ; its steps were thronged with multitudes endeavoring to effect an entrance, but without success. A young man was standing near, viewing the whole scene with intense curiosity.

“Can you tell me, Mr. Mayo,” he enquired of a gentleman whom he saw approaching, “why the world is turned upside down to-day?”

“Why, where have you been buried, my friend Charlie, that the Mordecai case has escaped your ear?”

“For the last five years, literally immersed in college ; living with the sixteenth century, rather than my own ; no newspapers allowed, lest our minds should be diverted from ancient lore ; consequently we were ignorant of the most important information, the history of our own times. But tell me, has it relation to Lemuel Mordecai ? I knew his relatives were enjoying his large estate.”

“Nay, there your informant was at fault. The property is the cause of the present litigation. It has broken all family ties, and it is believed and hoped will prove only a curse to those holding it so unjustly. A truly faithful old domestic has been deprived of a

small legacy, on the plea that his orthodoxy was rather doubtful. He has since been baptized into the Christian church, and lives with that disowned daughter, who is married to the professor of chemistry in the college of her native city, Rocklyn."

"No! not Miss Miriam Mordecai?"

"The same. A pittance, scarcely worthy being named, belonged to her in the right of her mother. Of this, strenuous efforts were made to deprive her, but Mr. Nesbit, the star of Varastone, in one of the most eloquent speeches ever heard in our court, set forth their injustice in its true light, and the poor cravens, who had endeavored thus to wrong her, were glad to hide their heads for shame. The property was at once awarded, and the dense mass in the court-room could scarcely be restrained giving public demonstration of their satisfaction within its walls. The streets resounded with cheers."

"And who is this Mr. Nesbit?"

"I believe a nephew of Mr. Spencer, and transacts all his law business. John is studying in his office. He has a sister, a Hebe in appearance. She has a syren voice, and plays and dances to perfection. I was fascinated, and desired an introduction. When gratified, I found her entirely shallow and uninteresting."

"But the lawsuit, Harry Blount,—what is occurring to-day?"

"The difficulty now is among themselves; twenty different prosecutions by those not satisfied with the distribution. Mr. Nathan Mordecai has appropriated so large a share, that his incensed relatives have burned his mansion, together with some small courts he was building upon the splendid garden of the old residence. The bank, to-day, brings a suit against Mr. Joshua Mordecai, for the recovery of two hundred thousand dollars, which his son received through forging his father's name. His father, in an evil hour, anxious to save his son's character, recognized the debt, thereby making himself liable for the payment. His wife,

always a shrew, is determined, she says, to live consistently with her fortune. Her house and equipage might vie with any prince in Europe, for which she is contracting debts to a large amount, as the tenants all refuse to recognize any as their rightful landlord, and no rents can be received. Several steam-vessels have been shipwrecked belonging to the late Mr. Mordecai, and as he never insured, the loss is computed at five hundred thousand dollars. None pity, all execrate, their very name. Scarcely can they pass through the streets without insult, and should a remnant of this ill-gotten wealth be spared, discord among themselyes and a blasted name will remain forever."

"Does Mr. Nesbit speak to-day?"

"He does, as attorney for the bank."

"Can we not possibly effect an entrance?"

"Our only hope is through a back window. I will pioneer." The attempt was made, and success crowned their efforts.

When Mr. Nesbit arose, the tremendous buzz, almost painful a moment before, was hushed, and such silence reigned, that his clear and distinct voice, though low, might be heard in the most remote part of the room. Major Nesbit stood riveted to the spot, with his eye intently fixed upon him, seemingly forgetful of the presence of any but the speaker. The curl on the lip of Radcliff, as he stood beside his father, showed he felt himself the brother of the admired Howard Nesbit. The lawyer for the debtor had descanted largely on the undue advantage the Bank had taken of paternal affection. He pathetically described the yearning of a father's bosom over one he had long cherished, and the many sacrifices he would be willing to make for his welfare, and it would depend upon this honorable body, whether this feeling, much to be commended, should be the means of depriving him of property, so unsought, and so providentially obtained. He was interrupted by a voice from the gallery: "Let the property perish with him; he has no right to a stone of it." Orders were given for the immediate appre-

hension of the disturber. The place from which the voice proceeded was searched in vain. Escape from the house was impracticable, and the mass were looking on with evident anxiety, until all hope of securing him was relinquished. The intense satisfaction then evinced attested to a feeling of sympathy with the delinquent, not entirely in accordance with the set forms of law and of the court.

The voice of Mr. Jacobs faltered, as he attempted to proceed. The excitement he had produced was of a nature rather different from that anticipated, and with a trifling apology for so long detaining the floor, he resumed his seat.

The loud whisper throughout the house, so unaccountable to Mr. Mayo, as they entered, was occasioned by this incident.

The right of the Bank to prosecute, was now clearly set forth by Mr. Nesbit, and the justice of their claim on the minds of both judge and jury, made perfectly obvious. "Upon the source from which the money is to be obtained," he added, in conclusion, "may I be permitted to make one comment. In the words of the rightful heir of the estate, when effort was put forth to deprive him of a small picture executed by his beloved and much-wronged sister: 'Injustice may have its triumph for a season, but the cry of the oppressed will reach the ear of the Lord of Sabbaoth.' "

He sat down, amid enthusiastic cheers, not possible to be restrained. After the verdict of the jury, Mr. Nesbit, remained at his desk, busily engaged arranging some papers, evidently anxious to escape notice, and watching an opportunity to withdraw as soon as practicable. Major Nesbit, with many others, returned home. Radcliff remained standing in the centre of the court-room. A number of gentlemen gathered around him, and his bland manner bore attestation to the undoubted position of those with whom he conversed so affably. Many flattering remarks were made, and the pulse of Radcliff beat high with pride and exultation,

when the announcement of a fresh trial again demanded silence.

“Greenwood *versus* Hill. Let the jury be at once empannelled,” said Judge Morris, “and the case proceed without delay.” In a moment the lawyers were on the *qui vive*, as the names of thirty jurors were distinctly pronounced. “Only three of such a number accepted!” he exclaimed: “shall we ever be able to satisfy these gentlemen?” After many difficulties made, twelve were at length chosen. “The case will now be opened by the attorney for the plaintiff,” said the judge. Mr. Friedland arose, looked around, and with some hesitancy, said, “that a witness whom he confidently expected at this hour, was still absent, which would oblige him to ask for a postponement of his cause for a few days.”

“A fine fee in expectation,” whispered a gentleman to Radcliff, “it is to his interest to prolong the case.”

“These postponements are exceedingly annoying,” remarked the judge, “and should not be requested lightly.” There was an amused expression on the countenance of the group surrounding Radcliff. “He sees the mote in his brother’s eye,” whispered one. “Yes,” was the reply; “when a plain lawyer, the beam was in his own; his cases were not too much expedited for the sake of his client’s purse.”

Several other cases were named in succession, but a variety of reasons urged for their postponement also.

“One hour and a-half literally wasted,” said the judge impatiently; “I will now name the last prosecution upon the file; if it be delayed, the court may as well close its doors for the day.”

“Come, Mr. Nesbit,” said one of the party, “are you not somewhat tired of the postponements. I have some business also of an important nature.”

“In a moment,” replied Radcliff, “I feel curious to know whether this case will also be set aside.” The judge, casting a glance at Howard read:—

“Buck *versus* Nesbit.” Howard started, and fixed his eye with amazement upon his brother; the next

moment, he was by his side. Radcliff in vain endeavored to assume an indifferent, contemptuous air, but the alternate crimson and ashy paleness of his cheek contradicted his pretended carelessness. A common Dutch-built man came toward them, whom Howard at once recognized as a lawyer of no repute, who was seldom beyond the precincts of the criminal court. "How is this, Mr. Vanwick?" inquired Radcliff, fiercely, "You assured me a compromise could be effected without difficulty."

"So I thought; but a mule is pliant to such a fellow. He would not listen to reason, but seems intent on revenge. I have been trying in vain, to see you for three days; you desired that neither note nor message might be left at your dwelling."

"What can have occurred, Radcliff," inquired his brother, "to place you in the power of such a man, or bring you into any collision."

"Nothing—nothing—I assure you," he replied, with affected indifference, "I pushed matters a little too far for my sport, and the old simpleton took it seriously. The circumstance had even passed from my remembrance."

"And why seek such legal advice?" he enquired; Radcliff colored, "I did not wish to give publicity to the silly matter—it might be misinterpreted by the world; I therefore gave this man fifty dollars to arrest it with a compromise."

"The lawyer for the plaintiff will proceed," said the judge. All eyes were now turned upon the attorney, who, after sundry signs between him and his client, (who sat beside him,) arose. Turning a pair of little grey eyes, twinkling under huge heavy eyebrows, full upon the jury, and raising a long, bony finger, he exclaimed, "Never was a jury called to pronounce a verdict in a case of more heinous offence." There was a general smile, and a whisper, "He is invading the judge's province." "He is only reversing," was the reply, giving the charge before the trial." Mr. Grub proceeded; "A simple hearted maiden, confiding in

the asseverations of affection, of one altogether unworthy of her, became his betrothed. Her suitor pressed the day to be fixed at an early hour; the union was about being sealed irrevocably, when a kind Providence interfered, and saved her such a fate. From that hour, Radcliff Nesbit has literally deserted her, and the severing of that unfortunate tie has brought her to the borders of the grave. She is very unwilling to have her name so publicly appear, but her outraged parent, wishing to see her righted, has resolved the law shall take its course. But what can minister to a mind diseased. Gentlemen of the jury, many of you are fathers—imagine your daughters in a similar position, and give a righteous verdict. Radcliff Nesbit has trifled with all the finer feelings of humanity, and deprived society of one calculated to adorn it. Who can estimate the feelings of a fond father for an only daughter, under such circumstances?"

"It is a base falsehood," exclaimed Radcliff; "false as the man who has fabricated it."

"Let order be observed," said the judge, "or the disturber of the peace be placed where he cannot invade the laws. Let Mr. Grub proceed."

The eye of Radcliff flashed, and he was about replying, when the hand of Howard was laid upon his arm.

"If you do not wish a lodgment for contempt of court," he said, coldly, "you had better remain silent."

"What evidence can be brought to prove these mere assertions in regard to Radcliff Nesbit, Esq.?" enquired Mr. Vanvick; "the standing of my client renders such a story utterly absurd. We must remember the word of Mr. Buck is not quite so good as his bond, or the romantic daughter may have had a dream to this effect."

"You are building on hope without foundation," replied Mr. Grub, "if you suppose it will end in air, or what is the same thing, in dreams. The clergyman, who was present to perform the ceremony, will give his testimony; a more reliable witness, from the fact of being an unwilling one. He is the friend and pastor of

Radcliff Nesbit. He is subpoenaed, and will appear in the course of a few minutes."

The entrance of Dr. Irving interrupted farther remark.

"A few questions, sir," replied Mr. Grub. "Were you called to marry Radcliff Nesbit, on the evening of the fifth of April last?"

"I believe that vile stratagem was used to entrap the young man to his ruin."

"We want facts, sir, no imaginings. Were you, or were you not, called to unite Radcliff Nesbit with Miss Malvina Buck?"

"Am I bound to answer this question?" he enquired, turning to the judge.

He bowed affirmatively.

"I was."

"When you objected to proceeding, did Radcliff Nesbit, express a wish the union should be consummated?"

"He was evidently not in his right mind."

"Did he make that remark, sir; I want a plain answer to a straight-forward question."

"He did; but was certainly excited by some stimulant, and perhaps infatuated by the beauty of the young female, so much beneath his own position. I have always believed he was drugged by the man seated beside you."

"That would throw a deeper shadow upon the case," replied Mr. Grub, "intoxication, in the eye of the law, does not lessen the guilt of the culprit; but we will stop a moment, and examine into the truth or falsity of that assertion."

The waiter of the hotel, was now sworn.

"Did Mr. Nesbit, call for wine, when in the parlor of Mr. Buck?"

"No, sir; there is always the best wine on his side-board. I happened to be in the room, receiving a message, when I saw Mr. Nesbit, get up, without invitation, and take a drink. As I left the room, he kissed my young mistress, and said, 'You will soon be mine.'"

"That is enough, Anthony."

The man withdrew.

"I have now concluded," said Mr. Grub, "if the lawyer for defendant can gainsay any of these statements, showing forth so clearly the guilt of the young man, let him do so."

Mr. Vanvick, arose; "If Radcliff Nesbit, Esq.," he said, "were a gentleman of no note, some impression might be made upon the honorable judge and jury before us, but his character is too well known to all present, to be injured in the slightest degree by these vilifiers. What motive could actuate a person of his high standing to stoop to such a sacrifice? When he applied to me on the subject, I supposed, of course, a compromise could be effected, at once, and confess I made little preparation. Let the case be postponed a few days, I doubt not we could overturn all this evidence that appears now so plausible."

"The trial must proceed," said the judge, "unless good reasons should be shown why it should be deferred."

Mr. Vanvick, with a deep bow, replied, "As my client has so little opportunity of making his innocence apparent to the jury, I trust they will allow his weight of character to make its proper impression upon the minds, and give a verdict accordingly."

"Fool," muttered Radcliff, writhing with mortification, as the lawyer took his seat, with as self-satisfied an air, as though he had really said something.

"I trust, gentlemen of the jury," said Judge Morris, "that your minds will rest only on the evidence brought forward; if it be sufficient to convict, let not the poor flimsy circumstance of former position, have any weight in your decisions."

The jury retired.—In fifteen minutes they returned with a verdict of "Guilty." The sum of five hundred dollars, was then awarded Miss Malvina Buck, to be paid by Mr. Radcliff Nesbit, for breach of promise of marriage made to the said young woman.

Many were the whispers, caught by the ear of Radcliff, now alive to the keenest feeling of disgrace,

as he and Howard slowly left the court room. "Pretty much of a rocket, as I always prophesied," said one, "His descent was tremendous, and the blow heavy—from the top of the ladder to the foot of it," remarked another.

"What a contrast," observed a third, "between the brothers, one truly great, without pretension; the other truly little, with great pretension."

The speakers were recognized by Radcliff, as friends of his early days, but to whom, of late, a stately bow only had been vouchsafed.

The crowd gradually dispersed, and Radcliff and Howard were left to pursue their way alone.

"Your *sport* was of a most unfortunate nature," remarked Howard, "as the disgrace does not fall upon yourself alone. The lustre of our house was sadly dimmed in Cornelia,—through you, it is miserably degraded."

With a look of displeasure, Radcliff was about replying, but meeting the eye of his brother fixed steadily upon him, he remained silent.

"They had reached the cottage of Howard. He entered without further remark. Radcliff returned home.

"What has happened, my son," enquired Mrs. Nesbit, "you look pale and excited. You do not sympathize with Howard so fully as your father. He returned from court, shedding tears of gratitude, that he was the parent of such a son."

"I, of course, mother, realized the wide contrast in our relative situations. He, the admired of all circles; I, a penniless nobody."

A reproachful look was the only reply, as his mother seated herself quietly at her sewing.

"Do not suppose I do not appreciate his merits, mother," he replied, answering to her evident disapprobation. "But—." He was arrested by the entrance of his sister Cornelia.

"Oh! it is only Radcliff. I came down, thinking it was the foot of Howard. I long to see just how he

looks after so much adulation. I dare say he is not in the least moved. Nothing seems to elevate or depress him. He appears to me as something more than human, mother."

"He is, daughter; grace has fitted him to bear the world's flattery, without any feeling of elevation. The Spirit's teachings lead him to see himself a sinner in the sight of his Redeemer; that will always produce an humble spirit."

"He has met with no reverses," replied Radcliff: "consequently, he has had no opportunity of manifesting submission in adversity. The nature of How is not gentle. I dare say the cloven foot would appear, if temptation offered; his eye, when reproving the relatives of Mordecai, savored strongly of the old leaven."

"He was speaking officially," returned Cornelia; "at home, he certainly is no adept in crushing the erring, as I have had full opportunity of experiencing. In that respect, his brother far excels him. Had Howard been a Radcliff, I should have been an alien from my father's home. The fear of dimming your escutcheon would lead you to sacrifice all natural affection, Radcliff. Your haughty and distant manner, since my return, would scarcely lead me to repentance. I have erred, greatly erred, but an erring sister has reason to bless God that Howard Nesbit is just what he is." Cornelia's voice faltered as she spoke, and, turning to the window to hide her agitation, she saw several ladies coming up the lawn.

"Kate Ruthven and the Misses Maxwell, who are staying with her," she remarked, coloring deeply, as she hastened to leave the room.

"If they mention me, mother, which I scarcely think they will, excuse me on the engaged list."

"Poor child," remarked Mrs. Nesbit, with a deep sigh, "how one erroneous step has blighted all her future prospects."

"I have an engagement also," said Radcliff, taking his hat, with a confused air; "I cannot see them."

"What engagement, sufficiently binding, obliges you to decline seeing the Misses Maxwell, Radcliff? Your attention to them has been so marked."

"An important one, mother," he replied; "but there is no time for explanation, as they are already in the hall."

Going out the back way, he quickly disappeared.

Mrs. Nesbit had scarcely time to wonder, ere the ladies entered.

Their visit was short, as Marion was from home, and they were on their way to the cottage of Howard, to spend a few days.

"Here are two notes for you, Mr. Radcliff," said Hogan, entering the dining-room as they were about rising from the dinner-table; they were left by different persons, who came to the door at the same moment."

The dark countenance of Radcliff, as he placed them in his pocket, after perusing them, showed the information they conveyed was of no pleasing nature.

"Some bad news, Radcliff?" enquired his father.  
"Your countenance betokens no good tidings."

"My evil genius, father; harassed with debt continually, without hope of release. I trust I shall be more successful in finding employment in Raisville, and have the power of cancelling them."

"You certainly need not incur much expense at present."

"I could not possibly divine the future, therefore retained my vehicle, hoping soon to get into business. Three hundred dollars is owing for board there. Then necessary articles of clothing amount to three hundred more."

"Your dress appears to me more becoming a gentleman of fortune, Radcliff; such a bill is inexcusable."

"Slight interest on the part of Howard might have obviated all difficulty. An account is always larger than present payment."

A ring at the door interrupted them, and a person entered, known only to Radcliff. It was Mr. Vanvick.

"Good afternoon, Mr. Nesbit; good afternoon, sir. Your father? Your servant, Major Nesbit. I hope no intrusion, ladies," he added, seating himself familiarly beside Radcliff, without noticing his confusion—"if so, a little business with my client must be my apology."

"I do not intrude my business upon my family, Mr. Vanvick," replied Radcliff, darting upon him a look of anger. "You can postpone all communication until to-morrow; I will then call at your office, sir."

"I will not give you that trouble, Mr. Nesbit; I merely wished to say that this ugly business, as breaches of promise always are, is likely to end favorably. Mr. Buck offers to take two hundred less than is awarded him, if paid at once. It seems he is in great pecuniary difficulties, and requires money immediately. Now that jury, Mr. Nesbit, ought to have made some allowance for youth and transient passion. Winey Buck is a very pleasing girl, and I admire your taste in choosing her. It was pretty late, to be sure, to change your mind, after the ceremony had commenced, but that jury might have been certain such a gentleman as Mr. Nesbit had his own, and good reason, too, for a change of mind."

"What is the meaning of all this, Radcliff?" enquired Major Nesbit, sternly.

Radcliff raised his eyes, and met the astonished gaze of Cornelia. "It is all nothing," replied Radcliff; "but this gentleman's love of prating; a desire for self-aggrandizement, and an anxiety to bring himself into notice. Your information is quite gratuitous," he added, haughtily, at the same time rising, and opening the hall door. "Save me the necessity of forcible expulsion, Mr. Vanvick, by leaving the house immediately."

"That would be a most unlawyerlike proceeding, Mr. Nesbit," he replied, coolly retaining his seat. "I have not yet executed the commission intrusted me. Mr. Buck, at the suggestion of Mr. Grub, seconded most strenuously by me, is now willing to permit you

to renew your addresses, and will receive you as his son-in-law, passing over all that has occurred, provided the three hundred be paid his lawyer by six o'clock this evening."

"Say to Mr. Buck," said Radcliff, rising to leave the room, "his five hundred will be paid in due time, and if another message is brought me from that source, or by such a messenger, they will both sorely rue it."

"Before you leave us, Mr. Nesbit," replied the lawyer, deliberately taking from his vest pocket a paper, "I have a small demand against you for extra services. The fifty paid did not recognize any court expenses."

Without deigning a glance at the speaker, Radcliff left the room, closing the door violently after him.

"I must request you, Major Nesbit," observed Mr. Vanvick, with the same air of nonchalance, "to present this bill to my client; a fee of fifty dollars was received when I supposed a compromise could be effected. One hundred dollars is the additional charge."

Major Nesbit received the paper, saying: "Of the merit of your demand, I cannot judge, sir, as I am entirely ignorant of the business which you have been called to settle."

"Nothing new, sir,—nothing new, I assure you. It all refers to the breach of promise made to Miss Winey Buck, by Mr. Nesbit, which you know was brought into court yesterday, and settled so absurdly by those knaves of jurymen.

"Did you say such a thing transpired in the open court?" enquired Cornelia, overwhelmed with amazement.

"Yes, miss, and a disgrace to the court that it was given against him. A change of mind is not so heinous an offence, after all, though the landlord tells me his daughter is dying of disappointment. She is a nice girl, and would have made him an excellent wife, had he kept up a notion that way; but he didn't. So good-day, major,—good-day, ladies. My office hours are known to my client. If he can defray this small

amount to-morrow, he will confer an obligation" So saying, with a familiar bow, he left the room.

"What can be the meaning of this?" said Mrs. Nesbit, as her husband returned to the parlor, after seeing the stranger to the door.

"Howard can probably explain," he replied, sadly. "I confess I am filled with apprehension for Radcliff; his course seems entirely downward."

"Upon his brow should be written," remarked Cornelia, bitterly, "'Physician, heal thyself.'"

"Do you not mourn, rather than exult, daughter," enquired her father, sternly, "that another deep disgrace has fallen upon our house?"

"I am only surprised, father, at its source. Radcliff informed me, most contemptuously, that any notice I might hereafter receive, would certainly be from mere compassion, and if I attempted to appear among our fashionable friends, he should withdraw, as he would feel himself obliged to recognize so near a relative."

"Radcliff spoke unadvisedly, when under excitement, daughter," replied Mrs. Nesbit, drawing her head gently toward her, and kissing her forehead; "he would never put such threats into practice."

"Kind words almost unnerve me, mother," she replied, while tears streamed down her cheeks. "The entire neglect of those whom I once called friends, although I feel I deserve no other treatment, is so galling, that no inducement could be offered to tempt me even to walk the streets of Varastone; therefore meeting me in society would never bring the blush of shame into his cheek. I have been back six months, and have only ridden through my native village."

"Many of Marion's friends have kindly invited you to visit them, Nellie. I would not cloak your fault, daughter, but desire to heal a wounded spirit. Go to the only Source of comfort—the healing balm of Gilead. The great Physician waits to give you the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

"I see the lovely spirit of His children, mother.

How differently have they received me, from those actuated only by worldly principle! A haughty stare is generally the only recognition, or if the head be bent, it is as though an infinite honor were conferred upon me. How different was Julia Ruthven! Taking my hand, she said so sweetly: 'I know it all, Nellie, but the offence has truly brought sufficient punishment with it. We shall soon be sisters in a worldly sense, let christian bonds also unite us. The link which Jesus forms, is close indeed. A tie to all things temporal is slight—soon severed. You have closed the door to former friends; there are barriers in society which prevent a return to them; but my hand, my heart, my house, are all open to you, Nellie, and I trust yet to see you a follower of the meek and lowly Jesus.' I fell upon her neck, mother, and wept tears of gratitude. What a degraded being I feel. I am humbled to the dust, but there is no sanctified spirit withal, dear mother. My old nature revolts when unkind treatment offers, and if it were not for your sake, I should rejoice at Radcliff's downfall."

"Cornelia!"

"Even so, mother, I should be happy to have him driven from society like myself."

"A most unsanctified, revengeful spirit, truly, daughter."

"I know it mother; I revere those influenced by the love of Jesus. I daily visit Emilie Jameston, and give her my entire confidence, but my mind is consumed with every evil feeling. Gladly would I take the wings of the morning and flee away, if I could find a resting place for a wearied spirit, but all the future appears a desert waste."

Mrs. Nesbit wept,—Cornelia, placing an arm around her kissed her affectionately, and withdrew to her own chamber to weep over the loss of friends, of reputation and of self-respect.

The tea bell rang; Marion, tapped at the door for Cornelia. "Come, Nellie, are you ready for tea. Papa,

has gone to Howard's; Kate Ruthven, has run away with Birdie, and mamma, and I are quite alone."

"Where is Radcliff; enquired Cornelia."

Marion, shook her head, sadly, "He's not at home. Our worst apprehensions are confirmed by Howard. He has brought a terrible blight upon his character, but it may be, he can offer some explanation."

There was a slightly scornful expression on the beautiful face of Cornelia, mingled with deep sadness, as she replied, "His fall may perhaps read him a lesson to treat his fellow wanderer from the path of duty with more lenity."

At a late hour, after the family had retired, Radcliff returned, and early on the following morning, he arose, packed his trunks, and arranging his carpet bag beside it, left the house before any one was stirring.

At about eight o'clock, a note was handed Mr. Nesbit. A porter was awaiting an answer.

It was from Radcliff.

"Will you, dear mother, please give my baggage to the bearer of this note. I hope to find employment in a neighboring city, and if Howard, will take the trouble to cancel the small debts I have been obliged to incur, I shall reimburse him as soon as possible; fifteen hundred will probably cover them. I much dislike being the recipient, but as his resources are great, I do not hesitate making the request, feeling it no more than my just due. I shall not return, until I can realize a fortune. That and that alone carries weight in society. I did not remain to take a formal leave of you all, as some evil reports, (altogether false,) were abroad concerning me, which I feared might lead to an unpleasant train of questions."

"I will write, and tell you my place of residence when settled.

"RADCLIFF NESBIT."

"His *just due* not recognized!" said Howard, as he returned the note his mother had handed him; "former favors appear to have been quite forgotten."

"Favors. Were they of a pecuniary nature, my son?"

Howard, started. "I spoke unwittingly, mother; let it pass, as though unsaid."

"It has only confirmed strong suspicion, Howard."

"Providence has smiled upon my efforts, mother. I have never suffered from any losses I may have incurred through Radcliff."

"Providence has overruled the evil that might have accrued through his selfishness," remarked Major Nesbit. "Did Radcliff bind you to silence, Howard?"

"My lips must be sealed upon the subject, father."

"Radcliff must have staked such a sum at the gaming table; he certainly could not have expended it. Will you say whether that were the case, my son?"

"I cannot exculpate Radcliff, father. May I not be permitted to remain silent? If you please, we will speak on some other topic."

"Your word is as your bond, Howard," returned Major Nesbit, kindly. "Let the secret be hidden with you." Then turning to Marion, he said, "at Colonel Tilmont's, to-day, I met the President of Gladeville College. He speaks goldenly of the talents and piety of a certain student there. Would a visit from this gentleman be acceptable, daughter?" he added archly.

Marion colored deeply, as she replied, "It would, father; Lemuel speaks of him in the highest terms."

"Where does he stay?" enquired Mrs. Nesbit.

"For a few days with Mr. Ryers. I have invited him to dine to-morrow. They will accompany him, Howard also, and his guests will form a portion of our party."

"We shall have quite a gathering," remarked Marion, with one of her brightest looks, "A most delightful party, truly."

The countenance of Cornelia changed, but she made no remark, until the family separated, leaving her alone with her mother.

"You will excuse my appearing to-morrow, mother,"

she said, "I cannot voluntarily meet the Misses Maxwell, after a conversation I overheard yesterday."

"Conversation! With whom, Nellie?"

"Between themselves. I was training a vine near the garden fence, they were picking raspberries in Howard's garden. One made the remark, 'The fear of encountering Nellie Nesbit, mars the pleasure of my visit, I cannot perceive the slightest humility in her bearing; on the contrary, she has a more queenly air, if possible, than formerly.'

"Do you know the title she bears in Varastone?" enquired her sister.

"Yes, Baroness McFadden. I met her the other day at Mrs. Jameston's, and that horrible name rang in my ears during my whole visit."

"Radcliff told Ned, that if she were permitted to remain at home, he should certainly seek one elsewhere."

"How contemptible, to speak on family matters."

"He was partly excusable. Ned, being an old flame of Nellie's, did not credit the report, and made some enquiry of him relative to it."

"I think Miss Winey Buck may be the moving principle this time. His disgrace has quite cast the Baroness in the shade."

"Where is Baron McFadden?"

"I cannot tell, and dare not ask," was the reply. "These church girls have raised up so much compassion for her frailties and youthful errors, as they term them, and talk so very good about reclaiming her by kindness, that a playful word upon the subject is received as though she were an angel martyr. Mamma says, she would have allowed her to reap the fruit of her own doings, and remain forever with the Baron of her choice. But, hush! here is Kate, she will read us a long lesson if we even venture to name the unwise step of the unfortunate Nellie." Can I see them to-morrow, mother?"

A tear glistened in the eye of Mrs. Nesbit, but she made no reply. Cornelia hastily left the room.

On the following morning, a note was received by Cornelia, from Mrs. Ryers, excusing herself accompanying Dr. Rufus, and Mr. Ryers to dinner, on a plea of a violent cold. "I shall be entirely alone," she added, "Will you not be sufficiently self denying, to bear me company to-day? cheering a sick friend will certainly be a fit apology to offer a circle principally of your own connexions."

A weight was removed from Miss Nesbit. There was a feeling of degradation as she imagined herself secluded through the day, in her chamber, and she felt like a freed bird at the prospect of being out of the sound of mirth of which she could not partake.

"I will gladly accept the invitation of Mrs. Ryers," she said, giving the open note to her mother. "Can Hogan drive me up in the carriage?"

"Hogan's services will be required, Nellie, but your father has business in Rocklyn this morning; you can go with him in the cars."

"The cars, mother!"

"Yes, daughter; by twelve o'clock, those returning to Rocklyn will have but few passengers."

Looking doubtfully, Cornelia proceeded to her chamber to make some change in her attire.

"I almost wonder," remarked her sister, "that Nellie does not proffer some assistance, when it is really needed."

"I mourn to see that selfishness still reigns in the bosom of Nellie, but we must pray Marion, that grace may accomplish what sorrow has not effected."

Cornelia, at the time appointed, hearing her father's footsteps, came down stairs with bonnet in hand to meet him. "Do, Marion," she said, as she passed through the little sitting-room, "get your bonnet, and accompany us to Rocklyn; I shall feel far more comfortable in having you with me."

Marion colored, as she replied, "You forget that much devolves upon me, Nellie, as you do not fulfil your part in household duties."

"In the low state of my spirits, Marion, any employ-

ment, foreign to my inclination would be peculiarly irksome."

"Why spend your life in vain regret, Nellie? you cannot recall the past; in benefitting others you would find many a balm for sorrow you are now only fostering."

"A negative to my request would have been all sufficient, Marion," she replied, haughtily, as she obeyed her father's call from the front door.

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## CHAPTER XXI.

"Some newest circumstance or place,  
Teemed as with ancient memories:  
A startling sudden flash—  
Lighteth up all for an instant,  
And then it is quenched, as in darkness,  
And leaveth the cold spirit trembling."

NOTWITHSTANDING the very kind reception of Mrs. Ryers, and her efforts for Cornelia's entertainment, the day wore away wearily. Their tastes and pursuits were of such a different nature, that it was impossible any sympathetic chord should be struck. Then she disliked children, and was annoyed with their society. She, therefore, after dinner, gladly acceded to the proposal of Mrs. Ryers, that she would obtain some rest, ere she returned home. On entering the chamber, she noticed a silk dress lying upon the bed, and made some remark on the richness of its color, and quality.

"That dress," replied Mrs. Ryers, smiling, "may savor a little of extravagance, but I purchased it for Annette Reed's wedding. She and I were intimate friends in early life—although she is three years my junior, and she rejoiced to find in Mrs. Ryers, her old friend, Miriam Mordecai."

"Annette Reed!" exclaimed Cornelia, "strange, I

should not have heard of her engagement, Who has at length won that splendid girl? She is so generally admired."

"Her aim is now far beyond worldly applause," was the reply; "she seeks to please Him, who has become to her, the chief among ten thousand, and one altogether lovely."

"Why! she has not become religious?" enquired Cornelia, coloring.

"She has been a very decided and active Christian for the last six months, and is to be united to Mr. Lennox to-morrow evening; a gentleman in every respect, worthy of her. Her benevolence will tell on the poor community of Grangeville, particularly as her means will be so ample, through the large fortune of her husband."

"Is he so very wealthy?" Cornelia almost whispered, while the color forsook her cheek, and a deadly pallor followed.

"He has taken advantage of the artificial value of property, and has realized three hundred thousand dollars; but with a small income, his weight of character and standing, would elevate the position of any lady, whatever it might have been before. In the church, and in the world, none are more respected."

Cornelia made no reply; her eye was intently fixed upon her knitting, but the hand which endeavored to guide the needles trembled, and her almost wild expression attracted the observation of her friend.

"Are you unwell, Miss Cornelia?" she enquired, kindly taking her hand.

"No—yes—not at all—" she stammered, "a slight headache, that is all."

"And that requires more rest than I have allowed you to-day," said Mrs. Ryers, rising and placing her arm gently around her; "you shall now have an undisturbed siesta." Leading the way to an adjoining apartment, she arranged a couch nicely for her, and withdrew to her own chamber.

The door closed. Cornelia was alone—alone with her own reflections. There was an undefined feeling

of relief that no human eye rested upon her. With a mind filled with anguish, she threw herself upon the couch, and vainly endeavored to banish thought. In a moment of time every deed of the last few years of her eventful life passed before her. It seemed but yesterday, when strolling through the solitary and beautiful vales of Grangeville, she became the affianced of Henry Lennox, and felt, until pride excluded every better feeling, that naught but death would ever separate them. Every expression of his fine face, was vividly impressed upon her imagination; every word was remembered. It was the happiest, proudest moment of her life, for Henry Lennox was the only suitor whom she had ever really respected, yea, truly loved, as far as the selfish heart is capable of affection. How recklessly had she marred her own bright prospects. Was he indeed, about leading another to the altar? The thought was agony—anguish; and she buried her face more firmly in the pillow. What might have been her position? A leading star in Grangeville. The admired, the extolled, the beautiful, the wealthy Mrs. Lennox. Now, alas! alas! another was to fill that envied place; to be his loved companion, to share his fortune, and exclude every trace of her from his remembrance. And she, how changed! Driven from society, despised by all, and noticed only by those impelled by the example of their Saviour. Then, the image of Radcliff stood before her, a brother but in name. His counsel had induced the dismissal of Mr. Lennox, the darkest act in her life's history. Memory, step by step carried her forward, yet dwelling on the past. The frown of Radcliff, on her return as the wife of Barney McFadden, was still present with her, and her withered heart recoiled at the bare recollection of one with whom formerly she had entire fellowship. But was the veil lifted from the future? Only for a moment. Disgrace, contempt, alone met her view. Her whole soul shrank from the contemplation. There was a slight shivering of the frame; a coldness,

as of death pervaded her, the blood receded from her heart, and a blessed unconsciousness ensued.

Mrs. Ryers was startled by a low moan proceeding from the chamber of Cornelia. Opening the door she stole noiselessly to the bedside. Her pallid appearance shocked her, and laying her hand gently upon her forehead she found it cold as marble. Her pulse also was scarcely perceptible. Checking her first impulse to call for aid, suspecting it arose from some mental cause, with great presence of mind she took some ammonia from a small closet and allowed her freely to inhale it; then seating herself, she fanned her gently and awaited the result with much anxiety. For a long time no sign of returning life was apparent, and Mrs. Ryers was beginning to fear there would be necessity for medical advice, when the eyes of the beautiful woman slowly opened, and looking wildly around she enquired, "Where am I?"

"With Mrs. Ryers," was the reply. "You have been unwell, dear Miss Cornelia, but, I trust, will soon be quite restored."

The lip of Cornelia was compressed, as if endeavoring to recall her thoughts. A deeply sad expression followed, and she averted her face, as though she feared the betrayal of some secret sorrow. Mrs. Ryers kissed her forehead and silently resumed her seat beside her. The stillness had become almost painful, when the voices of the children, were heard in the piazza below greeting the return of their "Dear Papa;" and Mrs. Ryers was greatly relieved at the sound of footsteps coming up the lawn. She went down to meet them. Howard Nesbit had returned with Mr. Ryers, and Dr. Rufus, for the purpose of accompanying his sister home.

"We much regretted your absence from our little circle to-day, Mrs. Ryers," Howard remarked.

"The anticipated wedding obliged me to nurse this cold, Mr. Nesbit, or I fear I should have overstepped the bounds of prudence and permitted my desire to be with you to be subservient to judgment; but Miss

Cornelia and I had a pleasant quiet morning. This afternoon she is quite unwell."

"Unwell! Is it possible? May I see her, Mrs. Ryers? The car starts in half an hour. There will be no other until nine this evening."

"Certainly," she replied, leading the way up stairs, "but as she complains of headache I fear the ride will increase it. Could she not be persuaded to remain until to-morrow?"

"I think not; Nellie is averse, of late, to the society of strangers."

The eye of Cornelia lighted as it rested upon the face of her brother.

"You are not ready to accompany me home, Nellie?" he said pleasantly, affectionately kissing her. "Well—well—I will wend my solitary way and depute father and Marion to be your escort to-morrow."

"Is Dr. Rufus here?" she enquired.

"He is."

"Then I will return with you, Howard."

"You have fever at this moment, Nellie. Do you feel equal to the journey?"

"Let me prevail upon you to remain until to-morrow, Miss Cornelia," said Mrs. Ryers, taking her hand kindly.

Cornelia shook her head. "Thank you Mrs. Ryers; I must be at home to-night, I must see mother; I think the ride will be of service to me." With difficulty, rising from the bed, she arranged her hair without glancing at the mirror, and throwing on her bonnet and shawl, she in a few moments was ready for departure.

"Your toilet is made speedily, Nellie," her brother remarked, pained to see the indifference she manifested.

A deeply sad expression was the only reply, as she drew her veil more closely around her.

"Stay Miss Cornelia," said Mrs. Ryers, "I must insist upon a light repast, before leaving us." It was declined. "At least a cup of tea."

"I thank you, Mrs. Ryers, I do not need any refreshment."

"We must hasten, or darkness will overtake us." Howard remarked.

"Abraham has returned from taking the children a ride," observed Mrs. Ryers. "Let him at least, drive you to the cars. The distance is quite two squares before you reach them."

To this proposal Cornelia assented, and taking leave of Mr. Ryers, who came to offer his sympathy, and kind wishes that she would remain with them, they departed.

The cars were filling rapidly, but Howard found a retired corner where his sister might recline comfortably, if she thought proper, and at least be sheltered from observation.

Cornelia apparently noticed nothing, sitting with her head resting upon a pile of soft cushions, which were conveyed, at Mrs. Ryers' suggestion, from the carriage for her use.

A stranger entered. Without noticing Mr. or Miss Nesbit, he seated himself immediately before them. Howard glanced anxiously toward his sister. Her eyes were closed, unconscious of all passing events. The cars moved on, rapidly did they fly, but Cornelia still retained her quiet position. There was much animated conversation, and merry peals of laughter among the travellers, but Howard in his secluded corner, succeeded in remaining unobserved. An anxious glance was often cast upon the stranger, then upon Cornelia, until, as they drew within a few miles of home, his countenance began to assume its wonted expression. At this moment, the gentleman, the object of so much interest to Mr. Nesbit, arose and advanced to meet a friend. A warm grasp of the hand was returned as warmly.

"How are you, my dear Frank, how are you?"

At the sound of the well-known voice, Cornelia started, her hand trembled as it lay within that of Howard; but she made a powerful effort to conceal her emotion.

"Quite well, Lennox, and just on the road to make you a visit of congratulation."

The two friends seated themselves before Cornelia, and continued their conversation in a low tone.

"You received my card?"

"Yes, on my return yesterday, after a tedious voyage of six months, and will witness such a union with unfeigned pleasure. When I say she is worthy of you, I feel it is the highest praise I could bestow upon her."

"That would be low praise indeed, in my estimation," he replied, "but such a boon will make life, as far as human nature is capable of happiness, all that is desirable; at present, there is not a cloud to mar my prospects."

"I never saw you otherwise than happy, Lennox; your clouds, if any arose in your path, were always tinged with brilliant hues, and scattered by the sun's rays almost immediately."

"Annette Reed is my beau ideal of all to make up the sum of happiness."

"Well done, Lennox. But let me ask you a few terrestrial questions, to descend from the sublime. Will it be a large gathering?"

"Fifty friends. The ceremony takes place at eight; no reception; at nine we return to my house at Grangerville."

"No reception!"

"Yes,—at any, and all hours, after to-morrow."

"And who are the favored guests, beside myself and sister?"

"Almost too many to enumerate. Spencers, Jamestons, Reeds, Ruthvens, &c., of Varastone, good old farmer Stone, his wife and sons, with a few other worthy friends of Grangerville."

"Pshaw! That is ridiculous, Lennox. They are very well in their place, but"—

"But,"—interrupted his friend, "quite worthy a place at my wedding. Who watched over me in contagious disease, and soothed what I supposed to be my dying pillow? who but kind Mrs. Stone, aided by her

husband. They may be plain, if judged by their knowledge of conventional rules, but if piety and moral worth is capable of refining the heart, they may well be termed the élite of Grangeville. They are my staunch friends, and will be considered so while this pulse beats. Annette sympathises fully with me, and seldom visits Grangeville, without making a call at Farmer Stone's."

"You are right, Lennox, I am ashamed of the improper sentiment I broached."

"Let it pass, Barton, excuse my warmth in the cause of some of my dearest friends. You stay with me to-night?"

Mr. Barton nodded assent, and the two friends sprang from the car as it was about running into the depot. Passenger after passenger departed, until Mr. Nesbit and his sister were left alone. Cornelia remained perfectly motionless. Greatly to the relief of Howard, he heard the voice of Hogan inquiring of the conductor, whether he had seen Mr. Nesbit. Perceiving his young master, he came forward.

"Have you the carriage, Hogan?" he enquired.

"Yes, sir; I just drove the Miss Maxwells down to Mr. Jameston's, and as I returned, I saw the cars coming, and waited to take up Miss Nellie. Is she with you, sir?"

"Yes; we will be with you in a moment." Drawing his sister's arm within his own, as he bent over her, he said, "I am afraid the journey has been too much for you, Nellie."

"I am not conscious of fatigue," she replied, mournfully, as she took his proffered arm, and suffered herself to be led to the carriage.

Major Nesbit, alarmed at the flushed cheek and quickened pulse of his daughter, despatched Hogan for Dr. Rodgers, who returned immediately with him.

"The very quick fluttering pulse," said the doctor; "betokens more excitement than fever; the languor I cannot understand. Let her have a few doses of nitre,

if restless through the night; a little chamomile tea will benefit her. I will see her early in the morning."

"You will remain with us to tea, Dr. Rodgers," said Major Nesbit, offering to take his hat.

"Thank you; I will not detain Hogan unnecessarily. I want to see Lennox for a few moments before I return home. He has given me an invitation to his wedding to-morrow. It will probably be a stylish affair, as no one can do any thing in reason now-a-days. I shall decline, and I want to see him for that purpose. Lennox I respect highly, and should be happy to gratify him, but gay scenes are not in my line. But by-the-bye, does Howard intend going? If so, he can carry my regret."

"He has declined also," replied Major Nesbit.

Dr. Rodgers took leave, and Mrs. Nesbit remained with Cornelia, while the family withdrew to the dining-room.

"Has any thing occurred, daughter, to disturb your mind to day?" enquired Mrs. Nesbit, when they were alone.

The crimson deepening upon the cheek of Cornelia was the only reply.

"Was the information conveyed so suddenly by Dr. Rodgers, before unknown?"

"I was not aware Howard had any communication with him, mother."

"Church associations have brought them together of late; Mr. Lennox has become a Sabbath-school teacher in our little church."

"Not Henry Lennox! I did not know that he had connected himself with it."

"One of its most active and efficient members for the last three months."

"Let us change the subject," she said, pressing her burning temples with her mother's hand; "it is fraught with the most poignant anguish. Oh! that I could erase all remembrance of the past."

"Dwelling upon it is useless, daughter. Regrets are unavailing. Let your future conduct atone for past misdeeds. The Sun of Righteousness will then enlighten

your path, and dispel all the dark clouds in which you are enveloped."

"Hope has fled, mother; the future has become a blank to me; even desire has almost failed."

"Look to that hope, daughter, that is promised to the soul, as an anchor sure and steadfast."

"Mother, it is distasteful to me; my future is bounded by the earth and earthly things."

"A blank future, indeed, my darling child. Oh! that you knew the peace, the joy of the believer; his foundation is sure, resting upon the rock of ages. Look to that Saviour, and that Friend, he will never disappoint, but will bring you to a rich inheritance. Reject him not, or—." Overcome with emotion, she was unable to proceed; laying her head upon the pillow, she wept.

"Do not tell me, mother, there is not perfect happiness in this lower world. Give me rank, wealth, reputation, I ask no more; I should be perfectly content."

"Were you ever happy, Nellie?" her mother enquired, raising her head and fixing her eye sadly upon her.

"Never. My wishes were seldom gratified, always straitened in circumstances, and holding an equivocal position in society."

Mrs. Nesbit sighed. As she was about replying, Marion entered accompanied by young Mrs. Nesbit.

Placing a screen beside Cornelia to shield her from the light, they seated themselves at the table with their sewing, and entered into pleasant conversation, hoping to divert her attention, as Howard had recommended such a course.

"Where is Howard?" enquired Mrs. Nesbit.

"He found a letter from Radcliff in the office," replied young Mrs. Nesbit. "Father and he are reading it in the dining-room. They desired me to ask you to join them, mother. A cup of tea and cream toast is also awaiting you."

The letter was written in the most mournful strain. "I am living literally alone in regard to companionship," he said, "in the small village of Loveton. I have

a petty contemptible situation at a salary of four hundred dollars a year, the half of which is expended for miserable boarding at a country hotel. If Howard had one spark of generosity, he could not endure the wide contrast, but would, from his abundance, liquidate my debts and allow me to return home. He appears to have altogether forgotten that charity begins at home, as I observed in the paper his name for two thousand dollars in some charitable nonsense. If he can permit me to remain thus, he will forfeit all claim to my affection or respect, Impulse, not generosity, governs Howard; I therefore have little hope. I wish I had held the place of Lemuel Mordecai, my chris-tianship should not have stood in the way of fortune. A fortune, now of no service to any. Thirty thousand dollars being all that remains of that immense property, and that pitiful remnant still the subject of litigation. Old Mordecai's relatives are ready to pick out the eyes of the old fellow for letting slip what seemed almost within their grasp. Certainly, Mordecai was not in his right mind when he rejected such an estate. I would turn Jew to-morrow to obtain it.

"It is not necessary to write, unless relief can be afforded me, as the direction may betray my place of residence, and my creditors may become troublesome.

"Yours, truly,  
"RADCLIFF."

"What will be your course, my son?" enquired Mrs. Nesbit, looking anxiously toward Howard.

"Forfeit his affection and respect, mother, and keep him where he must labor for his daily bread. Let him for a time reap the fruit of his own doing; it will be of service to him in after life."

Cornelia, having a slight chill the following morning, succeeded by fever, was unable to rise.

"It may be merely intermittent," remarked the doctor to Howard; "but her languor and want of interest in passing events are alarming. There appears so little tenacity of life. I have seen patients who really

seem to hold their life in their own hands, and resist every effort of nature to rally. I fear for Nellie, unless we can arouse her from this lethargy."

Weeks passed, and each returning day told upon the constitution of Cornelia. Her tottering step showed her failing strength.

Preferring to lie upon the couch in the library through the day, she was carried down each morning by Howard, until even that effort was too great for her, and she remained in the apartment adjoining her parents. On the subject nearest the hearts of those around her, she never spoke, and manifested weariness when it was introduced. Worship was held daily in her chamber. Their only hope, their stronghold, was prayer; and if the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man availeth, they surely were registered in heaven. Whole nights were often spent by Major and Mrs. Nesbit, pleading for their dear one, still a wanderer from the fold of Jesus, and the morning light would find the pillow of Howard yet unpressed. With what anguish of spirit did they watch the declining steps of Cornelia. The hectic told too plainly the nature of the disease, and the deep hollow cough was not to be mistaken.

"Nellie's time draws near to a close," said Dr. Rodgers to young Mrs. Nesbit; "no medicine of mine can avail her. Dr. Irving, perhaps, will be the better physician."

"Dr. Irving has been with her daily," was the reply.

"A most faithful friend and counsellor, no doubt," he returned, awkwardly aiming to say something bordering on religion, and bidding a hasty farewell, left the house.

It was a dreary day in the month of October. The dense dark clouds, piled one upon another, portended a heavy rain. Evening was gradually approaching.

Howard was sitting beside the bed of Cornelia, his arm placed underneath her pillow; her head was resting upon his breast. The attenuated hand of the poor sufferer was within that of her mother, who was lying

upon the bed. Her father, worn with watching and anxiety, had thrown himself upon the couch in his own chamber, beside Hattie, and was sleeping heavily. Marion and Miss Houston were in the room.

For the last four months she had been gradually declining, but watchers were now required day and night, as life was evidently waning.

"Raise me a little higher, dear brother," she almost gasped, as a violent fit of coughing siezed her.

"In a moment, his own arm encircled her, and another pillow was placed behind her by Marion. The oppression passed, and she lay perfectly still, her eyes fixed upon the heavens.

"Can you not rest your hope upon your Redeemer, dear Nellie?" her brother whispered.

Slowly raising her finger, and pointing upward, she replied: "Those clouds are a fit emblem of the blackness of darkness that reigns within. Sad, oh! how sad, to look to the grave as the only resting place for a sorely troubled spirit; but beyond—beyond;" her lip quivered, and she clasped the hand of her mother more firmly.

"My darling, precious sister," enquired Howard, wiping away the cold drops that stood upon her forehead, and tenderly kissing her, "can you not look away from self altogether, and place your trust in Jesus. He invites all to drink of the waters of salvation. He is waiting to receive you; he is saying now, daughter, give me thine heart. He has a blessed mansion prepared to receive the wanderer. Will you not trust him? he is ready, he is willing; he will give you eternal life, and you may yet shine as one of the jewels in the crown of your Redeemer."

While he was speaking, the eye of Cornelia was intently fixed upon him. As he finished, she whispered:

"Supplicate for me, brother; may I yet be saved?"

The voice of Howard trembled with emotion, and the low sobs of Mrs. Nesbit and Marion, tended to increase his agitation, as he bowed his head, and plead that the gift of a broken and contrite spirit might be laid upon the altar and accepted in the beloved. His voice re-

fused him further utterance, but a silent heartfelt prayer was offered as he still bent in supplication.

As he raised his head, a faint smile rested upon the face of Cornelia. She pointed to the window; every eye turned involuntarily in the direction. The sun bursting forth in all its splendor, had tinged the clouds with its golden hues, scattering the darkness, and brilliantly lighting the heavens with its radiance.

Her lips moved. Howard leaned over, and listened breathlessly. There was no sound, the clasped hand relaxed. Howard arose, and gently laying her head upon the pillow, raised his fainting mother from the bed, and carried her to her own chamber; Marion followed, and Miss Houston, after closing the eyes of the departed, joined Mr. and Mrs. Ryers, and young Mrs. Nesbit in the library to hold consultation relative to further arrangements.

We will draw a veil over the scene which followed, suffice it to say that upon the slab which covered the family vault, a simple inscription was added:

CORNELIA,

DAUGHTER OF PHILIP AND MARY NESBIT.

## CHAPTER XXII.

“Glad in the smiles of heaven,  
Great in the stability of earth.”

GRADUALLY the woods of Grangeville disappeared, excepting here and there a cluster of chestnut or other old forest trees, spared to shade the stately mansions, or adorn the grounds of some wealthy owner. The summit of the beautiful slopes were now crowned, and their sides studded with dwellings, from the gorgeous mansion to the more humble though not less tasteful cottage. The citizens of Varastone, wearied with the din and confusion of a crowded city, sought refuge in this retired romantic spot; many of the former occupants, whose broad lands were increasing in value tenfold, deemed the place much improved, while others who loved retirement, and would neither lose nor profit, beheld the innovation in a very different aspect; they remarked, sorrowfully, “Our godfearing village will be only a gay and fashionable country town.” Many was the prayer offered by God’s own people, that evil might be averted, and its candle still burn brightly upon its altar. Nor were these supplications in vain, as the “houses of cedar” towered upon the hills, they remembered that the “Ark of God” was surrounded only with curtains. Dr. Irwing, borne down by bereavement, sickness and years, had retired from his duties, and accepted a permanent home in the house of his old friend, Mr. Houston. A large place of worship is needed for our increased population, was suggested. Mr. Lennox whose time, talents and substance had been laid at the Saviour’s feet, proffered ten thousand dollars towards its erection; Mr. Jameston presented a like sum; many others, incited by these generous donations, gave largely, and in a short time sufficient to build a fine church and parsonage, was

raised. A spot was selected on the side of a hill, which for beauty of prospect, could not be surpassed by any Italian scenery; the corner-stone was soon laid, material for building obtained from Varastone, superior workmen employed, no expense spared, and in an incredibly short time, a large free stone building with its lofty steeple, appeared to the view of the wondering beholders. At a short distance stood the parsonage, not built in cottage style, but an old fashioned grey stone house, embosomed in trees, that almost concealed it from the view of the passer by. The edifice was completed, but a faithful servant of God was needed to break to them the bread of life. Many prayers were offered for direction on this momentous subject. Many clergymen were proposed, in every respect qualified, but conscience would not permit them to call one already in a field of usefulness. "Mr. Mordecai's studies must be nearly closed," observed Mr. Lennox to Mr. Jameston, "I doubt not he will prove an acceptable preacher.

"Mr. Mordecai!" exclaimed his friend, "strange, my mind did not at once revert to him, a thorough Hebrew scholar, a finished gentleman, and zealous christian." A meeting of the congregation was held, Mr. Jameston and Nesbit, as elders, were appointed a committee, to wait upon Mr. Mordecai, and invite him to supply the pulpit for six weeks in reference to a future call. Mr. Mordecai's last term had closed; the offer was gratefully accepted, and the following Saturday, found him a guest at the house of Howard Nesbit.

On the morrow, as he entered the church, accompanied by Mr. Nesbit, every eye turned upon him, and all were impressed with a feeling, almost amounting to reverence, as they looked upon the chastened expression of his fine face. When he prayed, the deep tone of his voice seemed attuned to hold communion with his maker. And when his subject was presented, "all tears shall be wiped away," and the bible laid aside, the speaker was forgotten, in interest in the discourse, and many a tear was dropped where

before, it had refused its precious relief to the mourning heart, bringing solace to the bereaved, and hope to the desponding. An impression was made that day, on the mind of the hearers. The spirit convinced of sin, of righteousness, and a judgment to come, and many were brought to the foot of the cross and added as jewels to the crown of their Redeemer. Every thing assumed a new aspect. Larger Sabbath schools were formed, and meetings for prayer, male and female, held daily in private houses. The pews were in such demand that a gallery was erected. Fifteen hundred persons attended regularly; all listened with deep attention, silence reigned, and the voice of the speaker was heard distinctly in the most remote corner of the building. At the close of six weeks, as their future pastor, he was elected without one dissenting voice, and on the following Sabbath, Marion Nesbit, accompanied by her father and mother, was led as a bride to the pew set apart as exclusively their pastor's.

All loved Marion, though some ventured on the remark that her hand was easily won by the stranger, but an appraisal of an intimacy of long standing soon removed the veil, and Mrs. Mordecai was acknowledged to have lost none of the maidenly dignity of Marion Nesbit, by consummating a union long since anticipated; and as the wife of their pastor, in a far wider field than Marion had ever occupied, she was enabled to exercise an influence, which greatly assisted Mr. Mordecai in the performance of his duties. The parsonage was a pleasant resort for all classes; a tear was mingled with the sorrowing, a bright smile for the joyous heart, and those whose silvered locks, and furrowed cheeks, told the ravages of time, always returned from a visit to Mrs. Mordecai, feeling there was still something left in life for them.

Hattie, again bright and joyous, was a constant visitor at the parsonage; an excellent school had been established, about half way between her home and that of Mr. Mordecai, and as there were two sessions, the

interval was often spent with "dear, dear, sister Marion," and on Saturday the hearts of Lemuel and Ettie were frequently made happy in the anticipation of a visit to, or from, Hattie Nesbit.

"She is now pretty near our real sister," remarked Ettie, because our Uncle Lemuel is her uncle too."

"Why no Ulie! she calls him brother, doesn't she?" Ulie was quite puzzled, and the grave mystery was left to be solved by mamma when she returned home.

Years rolled by, and the many seals of Mr. Mordecai's ministry attested to his faithfulness in the service of his Redeemer. Social, in the common acceptance of the term, he was not, but at the couch of the invalid, or dying, he never failed. The sufferers from whatever cause, always found a sympathizing chord in the bosom of their pastor, but formal visits were always declined.

"If we while away one pleasant evening with a friend," he said to his wife, "we shall be expected to mingle frequently, or give offence;" and as no exception was made, no exception was taken by his people.

It was a glorious day, in the month of June; the birds were carolling blithely among the trees, and all nature appeared to be rejoicing. The morning had not far advanced, ere Mr. Mordecai, who had been absent from home a short season, was seen coming down the road, towards the parsonage; the bright expression on the countenance of the domestic, as he opened with alacrity the unfastened gate, showed his appreciation of his master; and the extended hand, with the kind "God bless you, Abraham," of Mr. Mordecai told a feeling in his bosom, nearer akin to friend than servant.

Mrs. Mordecai, anticipating his return at this hour, came down the lawn with little Philip to welcome him; Miriam, a child of three years of age, impatient to obtain the first kiss, flew before them, and was soon skipping gaily by his side, with both hands twined affectionately around that of her father.

"Please papa" said Mrs. Mordecai, after the first greet-

ing; "take some notice of the Major, or his tiny hand will be kissed quite away in your service." The little boy, named after his grandfather, was instantly transferred to the arm of his father, and the beautiful head, with its chestnut curls, nestled quietly in the bosom of "Dear papa." With a look of parental love upon his children, and a heart filled with gratitude towards the Giver of every good and perfect gift, he said, "Throughout our eventful lives, Marion, we have been under the shadow of many a cloud, the darkest perhaps, (always excepting one,) that which pillow'd the head of our dear first-born in yon quiet resting place; but the boon of these precious little ones, has truly fringed even that cloud, and tinged it with a golden border.

THE END.

Jan. 23 1861.











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